

JALNA ICONS

Datta Joshi

translated from marathi by
Vikram Ghate



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Publisher



Vinodrai Engineers Pvt. Ltd.

Dawalwadi

Jalna

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Datta Joshi

9422 25 25 50

dattajoshis@gmail.com

dattajoshis.blogspot.com

Translated by:

Vikram Ghatе

9167284703

emotivegraphics@gmail.com

Co-ordination and Assistance:

Shrikant Deshpande

Jalna

Published by:

Vinodrai Engineers Pvt. Ltd.

Dawalwadi, Jalna

vinodraieng@rediffmail.com

<http://www.vinodrai.com>

First Edition (Marathi): **29 Sep. 2011**

First Edition (English): **14 Jan. 2013**

Cover and Interior Design:

the Catalyst

Aurangabad

printed at

LAP, Aurangabad. 9422706954

Price:

Rs. 250

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A priceless legacy
from
preceding generations
to the
promising new generation
of
Jalna District
for their
prosperous journey ahead

.....



JALNA Dist.

Acknowledgements:

Many well-wishers have contributed to the making of this book by providing information about the great achievers of Jalna. While their sheer numbers makes it practically impossible to mention all names, I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to all of them.

—Sunil Raithata

JALNA ICONS

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What you are is God's gift to you. What you become is your gift to God. In between these two ends is your life. No one can go back and change a bad beginning. But everyone can start today and create a successful ending. Your life is full of infinite possibilities. The history of mankind is replete with extraordinary lives who created exhilarating success and landmark achievements despite their limitations and handicaps. In the present scenario of fast changing trends, globalization, scientific and industrial revolutions, nothing is impossible. Anything that your mind can imagine, is possible to create.

Performances can be surpassed, records can be broken, milestones can be created. There is simply no limit to the human spirit. It is for this reason that the book you are holding in your hands is of immense value. In between the covers of this book are forty inspiring stories of real life existential characters.

They have started their life's journey from this small town of Jalna and spread their wings far and wide, actualizing their infinite potential. One thing is common in all these stories and that is their humble beginning. The second thing that is common is that each one of them has written an inspiring script of his or her life, creating lasting foot prints on the sands of time. These are not historical or fictional characters. These are real people in from this small, our own Jalna, all of them still active and kicking. They have all started from the very place which you belong to, they have all had the same handicaps which you have, they have all had the same struggles which you have and yet they have all

done their home land proud.

When you read through the book, you will find four qualities common in most of these people. These are (i) Self confidence (ii) Mental toughness (iii) Vision and focus (iv) Commitment to excel.

1. Self confidence: has three components (a) feeling good about your goal and your effort to reach that goal. (b) taking responsibility of your success on your own shoulders (c) developing the necessary skills to reach your goal. The basic and important skill in life is education.

2. Mental toughness: is finding opportunity in every difficulty and not difficulty in every opportunity. You can look at a rose and feel miserable about its thorn or celebrate the fact that every thorn is accompanied by a rose. Develop a positive attitude to life.

3. Vision and focus : The first step towards success is to have a vision. The second step is to keep yourself unflinchingly focused on that vision. Constantly look for ways and means to actualize your vision.

4. Commitment to excel : is the basis of the Japanese philosophy called as Kaizen. Kaizen means continuous improvement. The philosophy of Kaizen is, there is always a better way of doing what you are doing. There is always a better way to show care and concern towards people you love, there is always a better way to treat your friends, relatives, employees, there is always a better way towards customer satisfaction, there is always a better way towards creating good health, education, learning.

If you develop the same qualities like these forty Icons, which I have enumerated above, all perceived shortcomings like weak communication skills, language deficiency, financial problems, inferiority complex, limited small town facilities etc will simply whither away. The power of human spirit is far, far bigger than any handicap.

Understand that successful people are not born, they become successful by pursuing their dreams with single minded focus. Jalna may be a small place but the human spirit in a Jalnate, an American, a German and a Japanese is the same.

Creativity, entrepreneurship, business acumen can all be learnt and cultivated. You have the same infinite potential as every other human being on the planet has.

Come, go through the pages of this book and take your first step towards unlimited success. While you work hard towards realizing your dreams, don't forget to pray every morning to the Almighty - "God, help me to remember that nothing is going to happen today which you and I together cannot handle." God Bless You ! May you become another chapter in this book in the years to come.

'Chak De Jalna'...!

– Sunil Raithata

.....

JALNA ICONS

ENTERING JALNA...

It was the first week of February 2011. While I was in my office in Aurangabad doing my routine job, my cell-phone rang. It displayed the name of Jalna's famous technocrat, Shri Sunil Raithata. I have always revered him and found conversing with him to be a delightful experience. It was with the same attitude that I spoke with him. After we exchanged opening greetings and inquired about each other's well-being, Shri Raithata proposed an idea which filled me with a sense of excitement. Three years ago, I had authored a book entitled 'Jhep' based on the then generation of businesspersons, including Shri Raithata. There are many achievers who started from zero, but Shri Raithata has set up his business starting from 'minus'! I was aware of his contributions towards the development of the new generation. It was with the same vision that he shared his idea with me. He intended to publish a book based on the same lines as Jhep to introduce the achievers of Jalna, who were not only from the industrial field but also from diverse fields, to the new generation. It was his genuine desire that I take this responsibility. A quiver of excitement ran through me. I felt very honoured and lucky to be chosen to do his dream project. Moreover, out-of-the-rut work always interested me. I agreed straightaway to undertake the project. The next morning, I reached his pleasant office in Dawalwadi to discuss the details of the project.

Shortly afterwards, we were joined by Shri Sunil Goyal of Bhagyaxmi Group and an eminent CA, Shri Kumar Deshpande. The meeting concluded with the decision to include the biographies of twenty individuals in the book. Work on the project

had to begin at once. Over the next fifteen days, he created a list of achievers to be included in the book. Now, there were thirty selectees on the list. The first five persons to be interviewed were selected. I arrived in Jalna on 28 February 2011. Most of the people I had to interview were complete strangers to me!

The first interviewee on the list was Shri Paresh Runwal. The only thing I knew about him was that he owns a brokerage firm in Jalna. After entering the spruced hall on the first floor of a rather unattractive building, I saw signs of share trading activity. In the two and a half hour meeting with Shri Runwal, who seemed to be in his thirties, I discovered that I was talking to a youth who makes an annual turnover of 8000 crore rupees! I horripilated at that very moment. Although I knew that Jalna had a big trade market, I never imagined that the subject of share trading could assume such immense significance in such a small town. For the first time, I enjoyed being defeated. Presumably, it is the one and only center, other than Mumbai, in the state that offers all brokerage and financial services under one roof.

I was on my guard. I was simply excited to work on the project previously, but now I became aware of the responsibilities that came with it. My attitude changed from ‘What is there in a city like Jalna?’ to ‘What more will I be able to see in Jalna?’ I managed to conduct all the interviews in two months. Ten more achievers were later added to the list. The list included industrialists, businesspersons, professionals, social workers, educators. They were people from diverse fields, but the one quality they had in common was that they were passionate about their work.

How did the local saying ‘Jalna...sone ka palna’, which glorifies Jalna as the cradle of wealth, originate? What is so special in the soil and water of Jalna? What is unique about its people? I keenly sought answers to such questions while working on the project. Gradually, I began to realize that the selection committee had chosen the names very carefully. It was from very close that I saw the new generation of youth who were was changing

Jalna's stereotype image of 'city of merchants'. I also met the previous generation of resolute individuals. Among the luminaries I met in Jalna were sexagenarians, Shri G. K. Kabra, Shri Vinaykumar Mundada, and Shri Rameshbhai Patel. Shri G. K. Kabra studied despite experiencing great hardships. He went to Hyderabad in 1950 to pursue engineering studies. He quit a job he held for twenty years at the age of fifty and founded Kabson Company. Shri Mundada had a major role to play in designing most of the vehicles for Bajaj Tempo. Shri Rameshbhai Patel started out his career in 1975 as a supplier of loose tea before establishing his business empire of Vikram Tea in Jalna. The energy of these three doyens can put a youth to shame. Shri Nitin Kabra is a pioneering steel industrialist of Bhagyalakshmi Group, who believes that the other reason behind earning money is to address social objectives. The co-founders of Rajuri Steel demonstrate the tremendous power of a strong partnership. Among these successful supermen is Shri Dwarkaprasad Soni, who is considered to be the first among equals by the team, and whose journey is inspirational.

Jalna is also home to great educators. Mrs. Vishakha Deshpande has been imparting value-based education to students for over two decades. Mrs. Manisha Puri has set up an ideal school in Jalna modeled upon the best international educational practices. Equally valuable is the contribution made by the lab assistant of CTMK Gujarati School, Sanjay Tikariya, who has won many state awards for developing the scientific attitude in students through his sheer ingenuity. Jalna has some very creative individuals who enrich its cultural landscape. Mrs. Vidya Rao is a reservoir of artistic talent who continues to preserve the rich legacy of Indian Classical Arts through her Natyanjali Academy of Dance and Music. Rekha Baijal, the shining star from the world of literature hails from Jalna. It is very interesting to study how she became a successful authoress and what is the inspiration behind her books. Mrs. Basanti Chordia-Une, the owner of Jain Bandhu Pav-Bhaji personifies the power of women. She

stood shoulder to shoulder with her father in the most difficult times and helped him to transform their humble food cart into a spacious and successful fast-food centre. Priya Joshi turned her love of cooking into a successful career. She continues to pamper the taste buds of food lovers by offering a range of food products under the brand name 'Ruchi'. Mrs. Meenakshi Mehunkar's leap into the business of manufacturing lead seals with the support of her husband is another incomparable feat. Shri Narrottam Hansora has come a long way since the days he worked as a Dal-mill repair man. He took the bold step of starting a factory to produce machinery for Dal-Mills. In response to the changing market demands, he introduced innovative products thereby widening the scope of his business. His business is now looked after by his two industrious sons.

Shri Narayan Sonune was not able to keep up with his studies in school. He started out as a telephone booth operator before he became a leading supplier of stationery. His files and stationery materials have also made their way into markets outside Jalna. Students who are educationally unsuccessful can definitely gain inspiration from his story. Mrs. Sitabai Mohite, who once worked as a farmhand (saaldar) in Krishi Vigyaan Kendra, is now its Advisor-Director. She used her business acumen to start a production unit for processing gooseberries and other fruits. She has won many awards and made a great impression when she went abroad. Surprisingly, she is barely literate! Those from small villages can look at the example set by Shri Ishwardas Ghangaon of Dongargaon, who made it big after he started his business of banana chips. Another achiever of extraordinary character is Rahul Bansal, who sacrificed high-paying job offers made by top-notch international companies to create job opportunities for his friends in India. He set up a web development company, rtCamp, which has a majority of overseas customers.

Words fail to describe Shri Ashish Mantri, a degree-holder from UDCT, who single-mindedly pursued his goals in life. He

experienced the ups and downs of business at a very young age. He emerged as a leading agro-based industrialist after he successfully implemented the complex technology for producing quality protein-rich animal feed from cotton-seeds. The processing unit is first-of-its-kind to be erected in India, and two patents have been filed for its technology!

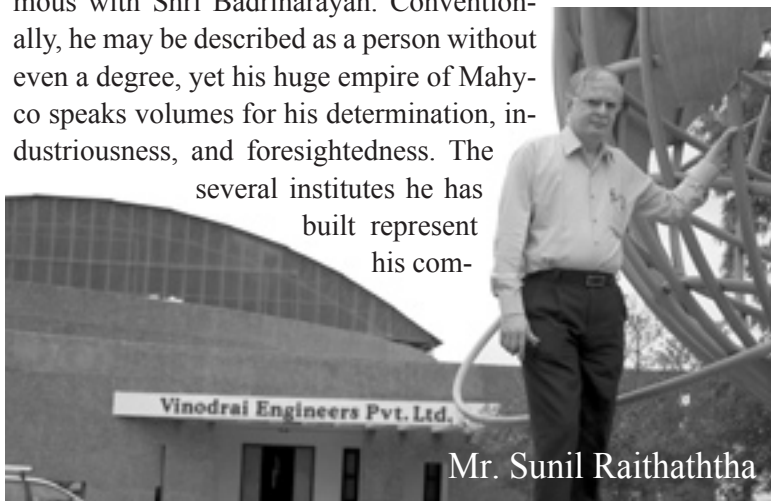
It is equally enjoyable to read the stories of other amazing achievers: Shri Pusaram Mundada, the man obsessed with his vision to start a fully-equipped blood bank in Jalna; Mohd. Yousuf Haji Ahmed-bhai and his family, who ushered in the supermarket culture in Jalna; The Sanduptala brothers, who captured the hosiery market and empowered more than sixty economically deprived women to become self-supporting; Shri Manish Rathi, the founder of Laptop Clinic, who is expanding his business across Maharashtra; Jeetendra Rathi, manufacturer of copper components and corrugated boxes; Sanjay Kedar, who started out as a pickup driver before he became the sought-after provider of transport services.

This book is a collection of the biographies of 42 individuals who are outstanding in their respective fields. After forty achievers were selected for the book, a necessary exception of including two more names was proposed. One of them was Rahul Lahoti, who was then in Jalna to spend his holidays. Having earned a computer engineering degree from BITS, Pilani, Rahul quit a high-paying job offered by Microsoft in America to specialize in Public Policy out of which he made a career as a researcher at IIM Bangalore. His story will definitely motivate the new daring generation of youth who believe in turning their passion and interests into a career. The second person to be selected was Manoj Patwari. Being deaf since birth did not stop this gutsy youth from pursuing a career aligned with his interests. He spares no effort to uphold the rights of the deaf community. His story serves to motivate differently-abled individuals.

The book contains the success stories of many other incredible

achievers: Shri Kailash Jhanjri, the plant-in-charge of Bajaj; Dr Sanjay Rakh, the eminent surgeon; Dr Satish More, the expert of homeopathy; Shri Surajmal Mutha of Ganapati Chhap Mehndi; Dr Anant Pandare, who helped set up Hegdewar Hospital; Dr Pramod Bajaj, the founder of SPPL, which offers products and services of international standard; Shri Vijayanna Borade of Kri-shi Vigyan Kendra, who transformed the lives of farmers; Shri Dinesh Chajed, the leading distributor of industrial supplies who keeps up with modern and ethical business practices; Shri Vijay-kumar Aggrawal, the inventor and manufacturer of UPS systems and inverters; diploma-holder Shri Kailash Malode, who made it big after joining a multinational company on the basis of his performance; Kalpana Shah, who became a leading caterer after she started a mini-catering business; Ravi Konka, who became a Guinness World Record holder for drawing the largest rangoli; Mohan Khodve, who offers respite from the heat by serving tantalizing ice candies. Each story will definitely give the readers something to think about.

Another great achiever is Shri Badrinarayan Barwale, the founder of internationally renowned company, Mahyco, which has put Jalna on the map. Mahyco has become a name synonymous with Shri Badrinarayan. Conventionally, he may be described as a person without even a degree, yet his huge empire of Mahyco speaks volumes for his determination, industriousness, and foresightedness. The several institutes he has built represent his com-



Mr. Sunil Raithaththa

mitment to the welfare of the society. Even this book does not have enough pages to present the interesting details of his life!

This was my journey through Jalna! I felt I was walking up a hill before I realised that it was a towering mountain. During this difficult journey, I came across pretty flowerbeds and beautiful reservoirs. Further ahead, there were fresh flowers on either side of the path. Amazingly, I never felt tired. It was simply a pleasant and enriching experience!

It would be most unfair on my part not to write a few words on Shri Raithata, who gives us this fantastic experience. He has taken remarkable efforts to publish this book. He is a successful industrialist himself. His products are exported to more than forty countries, but he did not become successful overnight. His story of struggle is quite different. It is of a gutsy fighter who overcame insurmountable odds like the Phoenix which rose from the ashes. After he obtained his degree from Government Engineering College, Aurangabad, he joined L & T. He quit L & T in 1981 and embarked on developing his own business. He has recently achieved an important milestone.

After expanding exports in many smaller countries, VEPL has secured the market of France. Shri Raithata knows very well the extent of trust he should place on his employees. For business reasons, they have made more foreign trips than he ever has! After he founded Vindorai Engineering Pvt. Ltd., he created men of character, integrated them with his group & took them on his journey forward.

Rotational Moulding Machines used for the production of water tanks are manufactured at VEPL. Water tanks of 100–200 litre capacity are available in the market. Shri Raithata has the technology for the production of such tanks. He started this business in 1991. After he participated in Plast India, an industrial exhibition, the entire picture changed. It was at this exhibition that he received his first order. Shri Raithata says, “We had booked the smallest stall in the exhibition. We paid for it in instalments. We

intended to put our machines on display but did not have enough money to spare for its transport. Therefore, we took their photographs and charts with us. We weren't prepared enough to even give information about the dimensions of our machines. Here we got the first glimpse of the global market. We understood our shortcomings. Thereafter, our progress gained momentum." He presently exports machines to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tanzania, Malaysia, Haiti, Nigeria, Fiji, Libya, Yemen, Tunisia, Sudan, Madagascar, Zambia, Qatar, UAE, etc. Recently, the remarkable quality of his products has attracted orders from France. He clears all doubts regarding exports. While many might perceive that the first major hurdle is that of language, he considers it be untrue. He says, "If your product is of the best quality, and you offer it at a fair price, then language cannot stand in the way of your business. In this case, only finance is important because everyone understands the language of profit!"

He has been leading the 'Young Innovators' Movement since 2009. Under its banner, he has organized several programmes for the children of Jalna by inviting experts from different fields. It is his sincere undertaking to develop the inventiveness of young minds. He has organized many activities such as Robotics Workshop, Photography Workshop, etc. He has spent nearly two lakh rupees to set up a well-stocked library for students. He is making an all-out effort to ensure that the upcoming generation of Jalna becomes highly competent and knowledgeable.

Corporate Social Responsibility is part of the modern business model whereby some funds are reserved for community welfare activities. It has come under criticism for being nothing more than an exaggerated outward show. Although Shri Raithata is not bound by such obligations, he leads by example by carrying the torch of Young Innovators to which he has recently added fuel in the form of this book.

I would like to make it clear that these 42 achievers represent just a small part of Jalna's population. There are many great in-

dividuals whom we could not accommodate in this book. It was decision we took with a heavy heart. The only reason behind this is that we were limited by the number of pages. If the next time we decide to publish a similar book then we promise to include all those who have been left out.

I travelled to Jalna, Hyderabad, and Pune to interview these 42 individuals. In Hyderabad, I received the help of Shri Satyanarayan Soni, a greathearted gentleman who has done many experiments in business. Meeting him was a very pleasant experience for me. I am grateful beyond words to Shrikant Deshpande who facilitated my meetings in Jalna and Pune. He accompanied me to every meeting. He helped me to initiate conversations with people and co-ordinate my meetings with them. We did many things together: he was equally involved in taking photographs; sometimes, I was at the wheel. The invaluable help he extended to me made my challenging job easy. Thanking him would only sound pretentious. One more person who deserves credit in the making of this book is Shri Sunil Goyal, who gave me valuable inputs before writing this book. His suggestions in all the articles have only added more value to the book. I am afraid, he may not admire my expression of gratitude! The true maker of this book is Shri Sunil Raithata, who supports social causes through action. Because he came up with this wonderful idea and took the initiative to publish this book, you hold it now in your hand. I am forever indebted to him.

I heartily welcome you all to step inside the inspirational city known as Jalna!

– **Datta Joshi**

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Jalna district is regarded as a land of holy saints. It is also known as the city of successful entrepreneurs and industrialists. Jalna can only be compared to the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan. The entrepreneurs of Jalna have been dominating the business scene in the state and the country for the past three centuries. In time, the business legacy has been passed down to their successive generations who are actively engaged in expanding the business further. The contribution of this new generation has strengthened the city's economy. While this book gives an up, close and personal insight about these achievers and their success stories, this introduction is simply a primer to describe the key traits of entrepreneurship.

Today, the terms 'Entrepreneur' and 'Entrepreneurship' are popular in developed nations. While that may be true, their meanings have changed with the passage of time. Previously, they meant different occupations such as that of a farmer, a soldier, and even military construction workers who used to build roads and bridges. However, it is only in the last 50 years, that these words have been disambiguated and today the term entrepreneurship conveys a definite meaning.

In India, the wave of globalization and liberalization has made the government to stand up and take notice of the importance of entrepreneurship. Even when this was an age-old concept in India, the reason it wasn't so well-received by Indians was mainly due to the strong conservative values and conventional upbringing. Except for those who pursued traditional farming and jobs, a majority of Indians entered these very professions. Service and their related titles in government offices, banks, and educational institutions were most coveted and respected. Even today, they

are held in high regard. However, this mindset was most common among Maharashtrians. In stark contrast, the Gujarati, Marwari, Sindhi, Parsi and Rajasthani communities were focused in setting up their own business and engaged in trading. The other noteworthy thing is that these communities were ready to relocate anywhere for their business. In fact, the business attitude is typical of these communities. This outlook has developed the Marathi community only in the past 20–25 years.

Who exactly is an entrepreneur? According to other books, there are many different interpretations: a person who organizes and manages resources to provide goods and services; one who buys raw material/resources/services at a definite cost, processes them, and creates newer products and/or services for selling at an indefinite price; a person who creates a means of personal livelihood and eventually creates job opportunities for others'; an enterprising individual who produces unique products and/or services and is prepared to take risks related to their business; one who is exceptionally confident, ready to face hardships or take risks, is achievement motivated, able to garner support and receive co-operation, wary of the current social situation, encourages innovation and is capable, takes responsibility and acts responsibly, is fortitudinous and not easily stressed in times of adversity. After incorporating such traits an ordinary individual turns into an entrepreneur and also becomes a medium of employment for others.

When entrepreneurship wasn't well researched and documented as a discipline, it was attributed only to birth (being born in a business family). It was later recognized as a discipline which people could study to become entrepreneurs.

What are the characteristics of an entrepreneur?

1. Strong Work Ethic:

Entrepreneurs are often industrious and work enthusiastically. This rubs off on all those associated and they too get motivated to work efficiently. Everyone including family, friends or colleagues inevitably find such individuals appealing and accept their advice and direction. They never take their mind off their work, are diligent, and exhibit great energy.

2. Persistence:

Persistence is simply the never-give-up attitude. It is one of the major traits of an entrepreneur. Fighting and withstanding all odds, finding effective solutions to problems, dealing with tensions or stressful situations help to reinforce the persistence of an individual.

3. Decisiveness:

The ability to make sound decisions, in a time-bound manner, after examining relevant facts and change them if required are the signs of a successful entrepreneur. It is always better to take a decision than to delay making decisions or to take no decision at all. As per the situation, an entrepreneur should also be flexible enough to change decisions that may lead to losses or undesired results.

4. Opportunity seeker:

Entrepreneurs research the market requirements, create new needs, and work towards fulfilling those needs. Their constant quest for innovation helps them to come up with fresh products, provide unique services, employ new technologies, and discover new skills. While they work towards personal gain, the society indirectly benefits from them.

5. Goal motivation:

The person who has the drive to achieve the defined goal, prove oneself, and daringly works towards self-employment is a true entrepreneur.

6. Organizational skills:

The ability to effectively put together resources, delegate tasks, as well as supervise the careful and timely execution of work to produce a good or service of value accounts for organizational skill.

7. Attitude:

Innovation, creativity, analytical ability, courage to stand firm in unfavourable conditions, and the ability to make the most out of a difficult situation comprises an enterprising attitude. An entrepreneur is always aware of his/her moral and social obliga-

tions.

8. Adaptability:

An entrepreneur is flexible to change as per the time or situation.

9. Self-image:

It isn't necessary for entrepreneurs to have all the required traits, but most of them usually a part of their personality. They have a good sense of their own worth and know their strengths and weaknesses. They are open to develop new traits to serve business interests.

The more desirable qualities an entrepreneur has, the more successful that he or she becomes. These qualities are not only favourable to one's business or profession, but also prove helpful in their personal lives. They help you to excel in any field be it writing, arts, sports, work, or personal responsibilities.

Why are some writers successful than others?

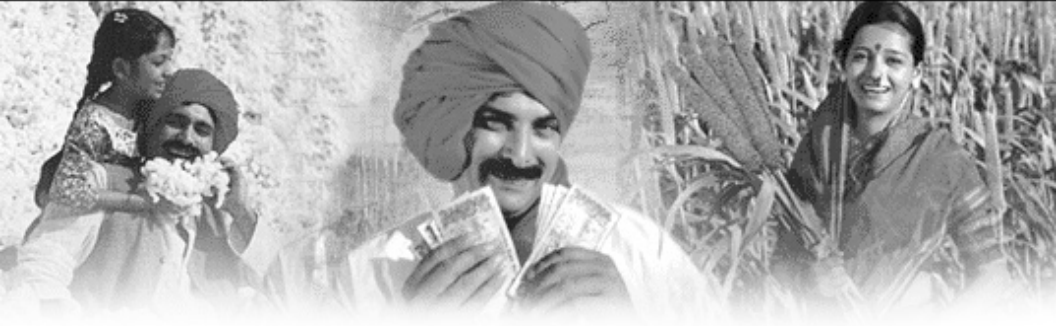
Why are some leaders more successful than others?

Why are some more successful in their personal lives than others?

After searching for answers to such questions, we discover that it has all to do with having the business traits. Reading the book with this inquisitive spirit will prove to be most advantageous to all readers.

-Kumar Deshpande

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The 'Bhageeratha' of Agriculture

Jalna is synonymous with Mahyco and Mahyco with Shri Badrinarayan Barwale. He is known as the Father of the Indian Seed Industry for blazing a trail in the field of agriculture.



**Shri
Badrinarayan
Barwale**

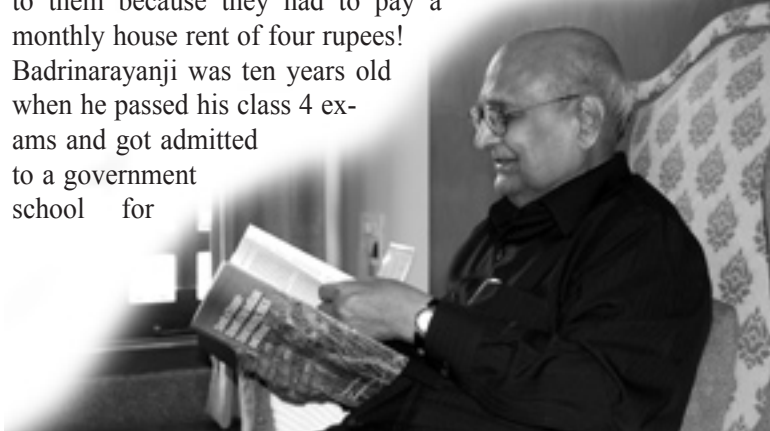
His mega empire of Mahyco is built upon his threefold principle of precise situational awareness, readiness to work hard, and the constant pursuit of innovation. It is an exceptional project worthy of study and also a matter of pride for the residents of Jalna.

This is the amazing story of Badrinarayanji and Mahyco's journey.



On 21 March 2001, at a grand ceremony held in Rashtrapati Bhavan, Delhi, his Excellency, the President of India, K.R. Narayanan bestowed Shri Badrinarayan Ramulal Barwale with the Padma Bhushan, one of the highest civilian awards, for his outstanding contribution to trade and economic activity. This was an unforgettable day not only for the team of Mahyco, and the people of Jalna and Marathwada but also for the industry to which he had devoted his life. It was a moment of pure jubilation for everyone to see a true son of the soil being honoured. This veneration was of the ‘Bhageeratha’ who had brought the currents of change into the field of agriculture. The story of Badrinarayanji’s journey in the field of hybrid seeds over seven decades and that of the previous two decades of his life is engrossing.

Hingoli district was once a taluka of Parbhani District and was populated by nearly ten thousand people. It was in this town that Badrinarayan Jaikishan Kagliwal was born at noon on 27 August 1930, which was also the day of Ganesh Chaturthi. Jaikishanji, his father, worked as a milkman to make ends meet. Badrinarayanji faced many hardships in his childhood. He attended a village school run by a teacher, Vamanrao. He helped supplement the household income at a very young age by buying sacks of sugar, onions, and potatoes, and selling their contents loosely in the weekend market. He also sold clarified butter and various home-made medicinal powders (churna). Every rupee was precious to them because they had to pay a monthly house rent of four rupees! Badrinarayanji was ten years old when he passed his class 4 exams and got admitted to a government school for



class 5. The wife of one of his teachers, who had a flock of sheep, often sent a couple of students to the farm to fetch the acacia (babli) leaves; Badrinarayanji went alone whenever it was his turn.

In that period, an incident changed Badrinarayanji's life. Bhikulalji Barwale, a cloth merchant of Jalna, was the father-in-law of Badrinarayanji's cousin sister. The sudden demise of her husband prompted the Kagliwals to arrive in Jalna to offer their condolences to the Barwale family. Impressed by the liveliness of young Badrinayanji, Bhikulalji straightaway requested the Kagliwals for his adoption. His decision was also rooted in the fact that he had lost his only son and had no future successor. After the Kagliwals gave their consent, formalities for Badrinarayanji's adoption were completed. Badrinarayan Jaikishan Kagliwal was now Badrinarayan Ramulal Barwale.

Conditions in Jalna were extremely better than in Hingoli. Bhikulalji made a fortune from his cloth business. Unfortunately, he died quite early. Soon afterwards, his relatives became embroiled in a dispute over Badrinarayanji's adoption. Their objections took the form of lawsuits and court trials. An amicable settlement was reached, and life was back to normal. These dramatic events unfolded when Badrinarayanji was only twelve.

During this period, Jalna was under the Nizam's regime. Jalna also participated in the nationwide movement against British Raj. After Badrinarayanji came to Jalna, he attended Mission High School till class 7. In 1943, he got admitted to Madarse Fokania Sarkar-e-Ali School to acquire further education. It was a period of oppression. One had to struggle for almost everything. Back then, students studied under oil lamps, but did not receive enough oil. After Badrinarayanji led a students' movement to demand more oil, the concerned officers gave in to their demands. Everyone received two extra units of oil. After he matriculated in 1946, Badrinarayanji applied to Nizam College of Hyderabad. By then, the Independence Movement had reached its conclusive stage. After he gained admission to Nizam College, he returned to Jalna. He actively participated in the freedom struggle by lettering the walls with protestations, and printing and distributing hand-outs. In 1947, India won its freedom from the British rule, but the Marathwada region was still in the

Nizam's iron grip. The provisions of the Independence Act drafted by the British allowed the Nizam to hold dominion over the region. However, the Indian government kept persuading the defiant Nizam for the integration of Hyderabad province with the Indian Republic. Badrinarayanji's activism brought him under the scanner of the razakars. When they raided his house, they stumbled on a hand-out. Badrinarayanji was brought before the S.P. Taking into account his young age, the S.P. offered to release him provided he gave in writing that he was not involved in such activities, but Badrinarayanji boldly turned down his offer. He was put in a prison in Jalna. The sharp rise of protesters being imprisoned often led to overcrowding in jails. The small cell in which Badrinarayanji was imprisoned had 43 captives! A few days later, he was shifted to a Central Jail in Aurangabad. He was tried in court. He was sentenced to a year in prison with hard labour and fined 500 rupees. However, he was released early. He served ten and a half months in prison.

Gulabchandji Nagori of Aurangabad and Kalyanmal Gangwal of Dhakefal were his co-workers in the prison barracks. In prison, Badrinarayanji willingly requested for farm work. He was keenly interested in farming and wanted to work in the field of agriculture. The State Congress was engaged in dialogue with the Nizam. The decision to release some captives was reached. Badrinarayanji was also pardoned on grounds of age. He soon returned to Jalna and joined a camp set up in the premises of Shri Balaji Sansthan Dharma-shala in Deulgaon Raja. Many people were upset that their region was not free from the Nizam's rule even after India had gained freedom. This led to an upsurge in revolutionary activity. To sustain the freedom struggle, revolutionaries often raided the Nizam's strongholds, including police stations and tehsils for seizing arms and ammunition, and looting money.

Badrinarayanji received arms training at the camp in Deulgaon Raja. The training was given by officers of the Sikh Regiment. After he completed his training, he was assigned the mission of exploding the bridge over the river Kundalika. He was accompanied by Rammanlal Parekh of Aurangabad and Ramchandra Hundekar of Jalna. Despite the tight security, the heroic trio managed to plant the explosives below the bridge; after connecting them to a burning wick

they swiftly went far away. Coincidentally, the place was also Badrinarayanji's grandparental village. After hatching their plan, they sat at his grandfather's shop in eager anticipation. After they heard the loud explosion, they made their way towards Deulgaon Raja. On 13 August 1948, news that Razakars were excessively torturing Hindus reached the camp. A team of freedom fighters attacked the police headquarters to revolt against these incidents. In the ensuing clashes, a fellow revolutionist and Badrinarayanji's uncle, Shri Janardan was shot and seriously injured. The attack was called off, and he was immediately rushed to the camp. He was bleeding profusely because the bullet had penetrated deep into his body. He was rushed to the district hospital in Buldana, but the doctors failed to save him. Shri Janardan passed away on the night of August 14. On 15 August 1948, when the entire nation was celebrating the first foundation day of Independence, Badrinarayanji and his associates were at the cremation grounds to light the funeral pyre of his uncle Shri Janardan. On 13 September 1948, a military operation code named 'Operation Polo' was launched by the Indian Army to secure Hyderabad. On 17 September, the Nizam's brutal and repressive regime ended, and India finally annexed the State of Hyderabad; however, the repercussions of these events were immediate. In Kajla area near Jalna, some Hindus were mobilizing to burn the Muslims alive. When Badrinarayanji came to know of this terrible plot, he immediately headed towards Kajla. He managed to avert the tragedy



by convincing the angry mob that the war was against the Razakars and not against the Muslims.

As a tribute to Uncle Janardan's patriotic spirit, his statue was erected in Jalna's main square. Veteran freedom fighter Shri Govindbhai Shroff was invited to unveil the statue. A huge crowd gathered in the square to offer their respects. On this occasion, a car was presented to Shri Govindbhai on behalf of the freedom fighters of Jalna.

Shortly before the Nizam's rule ended, a new chapter was added in Badrinarayanji's life. After Badrinarayanji attained 18 years of age, he got many marriage proposals. Nandlalji Jhunjhunwala of Khamgaon made a marriage proposal on behalf of his daughter Gomati. The statue of Uncle Janardan was also being sculpted in Khamgaon. The bride-seeing program was fixed on the day Badrinarayanji had planned to go to Khamgaon for the statue. Badrinarayanji liked Gomati. He chose to marry her. The date of marriage was fixed. Badrinarayanji declined the dowry of ten thousand rupees offered by his in-laws. In fact, he bought 100 tolas of gold jewellery for Gomati. Gold then was priced at 100 rupees per tola. Their wedding was celebrated with full pomp and gaiety. They had six children: five daughters, Prema, Shobha, Savita, Asha, and Usha, and a son, Raju. Presently, Raju Barwale looks after the administration of Mahyco while Usha oversees its research division. There is a wonderful coincidence related to Badrinarayanji's marriage. They did not check their marriage documents (lagna-patrika) for compatibility before marrying each other. It was long after they got married that they had them examined. It was found that Badrinarayanji was born on Ganesh Chaturthi Day and Gomati was born on Rakhshabandhan Day. Both were mangliks and their 36 qualities (gunas) matched perfectly!

After marriage, Badrinarayanji started to focus on farming. On an average, each Indian family had five acres of land. The Green Revolution was sweeping the nation. Everyone was trying to fill the huge deficit of food grains. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) was researching hybrid seeds. The focus was gradually shifting from traditional farming practices to hybrid varieties of seed. Badrinarayanji had the facility of water wells in his farm

for irrigation. He paid special attention for deepening these wells to ensure there was adequate water. He started producing lady's fingers; he sold the seeds derived from the produce. The brand was known as Pusa Makhmali. His new business proved to be profitable. Badrinarayanji and his brother-in-law Girdharilal attended an agricultural exhibition at Delhi organised by the Bharat Krishak Samaj. Here, he got information on the latest developments made by America and Russia in agriculture. Shortly afterwards, he visited IARI. The IARI conducted many experiments in its Botany Department. Here, Badrinayanji inquired about the Pusa Makhmali variety only to discover that its production had been discontinued. Instead, the IARI had developed a new variety resistant to the yellow vein mosaic virus called Pusa Savani. An IARI officer offered him 50 gm of Pusa Savani seeds as a sample, but he asked for more seeds. He returned to Jalna with 2 kg of seeds.

In his farm in Mundwa, he sowed some seeds in a small plot. He was amazed to see the robust yield of lush green lady's fingers, which had five vertical rows of seeds. After he cooked them, he noticed that they were less greasy than the other varieties of lady's fingers. He reaped nearly 100 kilos of lady's fingers. He sold them at 2 rupees per kg. The next day, its price slipped down to 1 rupee per kg. On the third day, its market price was 50 paise per kg. The large supply of lady's fingers in the market led to the sudden drop in its price. The quality of the produce available in the market was not as good as his produce, but the great influx of lady's fingers caused its price to drop. He figured out that he could have made a good profit by selling his produce after the other farmers had sold their entire produce. Probably, he also miscalculated its ripening time. He waited longer to reap the remaining produce of lady's fingers. He let the fruits ripen sufficiently. The lady's fingers grew to nearly nine inches in length. He collected the fruits and brought them home.

This time Badrinarayanji wanted to make most of his lady's finger produce. He hit upon the idea of commercial seed production. The idea gave birth to the seed industrialist in him. This was actually the inception of Mahyco. He embarked on a new venture to overcome the effects of market instability. This proved to be a turning point in his life!

Badrinarayanji rented a stall in an exhibition in Aurangabad organized by the Government of Maharashtra. It was attended by the then prime minister, Yashwantrao Chavan. Badrinarayanji displayed a number of insecticides of Burma Shell Company, including Endrin, Aldrin, and Dieltrin. He decorated his stall with the Pusa Makhmali variety of lady's fingers and two of its saplings on either side of the stall. A Pune based businessman approached Badrinarayanji to buy the seeds. Badrinarayanji made a deal with the businessman to sell the seeds at Rs 5.50 per kg with a discount of 20%. He dispatched nearly 25–30 kg seeds from Jalna to Pune by rail. The buyer started haggling over the price. Badrinarayanji knew that the buyer was selling the seeds to farmers for 20–100 rupees per kg. He flatly refused to compromise on the price.

The growing demand for the seeds prompted him to step up the production of lady's fingers. Another cultivator, Lt. Col. Lal Singh, was also growing the same variety of lady's fingers in the northern foothill regions and selling its seeds. As a result, many customers bargained with Badrinarayanji, but he never compromised on the price. In this period, Badrinarayanji came to know that Dr Venkatratnam, who worked as a senior chartered officer in Delhi, was on a trip to Aurangabad. Badrinarayanji requested his friend Barrister Jawaharlal Gandhi to invite Dr Venkatratnam to his farm. Dr Venkatratnam was very impressed with Badrinarayanji's work. After he returned to Delhi, he recounted his experience to Sardar Harbhajan Singh. He also wrote an article, Lender becomes Seed Producer, in his magazine!

Thus began Badrinarayanji's entrepreneurial journey and the entire nation was witnessing it. It was a different era. Increasing the production of food grains was the need of the hour. As a farmer, Badrinarayanji understood the gravity of the situation quite well. He took up the cause with patriotic fervour. He used his skills to introduce many new trends in farming. A detailed account of this journey would require a separate book, but some events are worth mentioning. After he introduced hybrid corn seeds into the market, there was a two-fold rise in the production of corn. The farmers could benefit from the high yield only if they could sell their produce. Only then they would buy seeds for the next growing season. A division

of Hindustan Lever Company used to process corn to produce feed for livestock. Badrinarayanji entered into an agreement with HLL to supply corn. He bought the corn from the farmers and sold it to the company. This sent a clear message to the farmers: Not only could they sell their produce but also get good returns for it. This led to an increase in the demand for seeds. Badrinarayanji says, 'A farmer is not a simpleton. He is very intelligent. If someone plans to deceive him, then he may be fooled only once. It is impossible to cheat him twice. Therefore, he can identify good-quality seeds.'

Badrinarayanji hired researchers and management experts from renowned Universities. There was a significant increase in the production of food grains in India, but it was also necessary to sustain this positive trend. Badrinarayanji says, 'Hiring the finest experts is important to develop the best product and maintaining its quality at all times. Of course, all this requires money. It is vital to earn good profits to run the company effectively. Research and development (R & D) requires hefty investments. Therefore, since the beginning, the quality of our seeds has been exceptional, and they are highly priced in the market.' The journey which began with the humble lady's finger has now encompassed many crops, including corn, jowar (sorghum), bajra (pearl millet), wheat, cotton, and rice. The success of Mahyco drove many industrialists to get on the bandwagon. Badrinarayanji does not consider them as rivals but as fellow travelers. He maintains good relations with them. Whenever necessary, he entered into co-operative agreements with foreign companies for developing certain technologies, but he has given emphasis to indigenous research for developing new strains of seeds.

The formation of his character is another interesting aspect of his life. Everyone is astonished to discover that he is an individual born in the pre-independence era, who never went to college, yet he built a large industrial organization in the next half decade. The only advantage he had was his business background. He performed a patriotic role to liberate Marathwada from the razakars. Afterwards, he stepped into the world of business. He emerged as a serious entrepreneur in the period in which he worked on his farm, acquired an oil agency, and conducted trials on hybrid seeds. He started concentrating his efforts in the field of hybrid seeds in which he saw a bright

future. In the course of this journey, he faced many challenges. The first impediment was of English. He needed more than what he had learned in school to develop his business. His interest of reading English books and articles served him well. He used the business letters he received from his oil company as a reference to develop business English. The western oil company wrote to its distributors in highly-effective English. In this way, he learned business English. He was mocked by others for his poor communication in English, yet he continued learning English till he gained English proficiency. Thus, he worked independently to expand his business and develop his relations in India and across the world.

Badrinarayanji had no technical or research background. He discovered the enterprising spirit within him. His biggest accomplishment was setting up Mahyco, which is based on the foundation of scientific research. His innate abilities were key to his success. He was aware of the importance of innovation and progress, needs of farmers, geographical conditions, and the available opportunities in the market. In addition to having marketing skills, one must be able to identify the needs of the target customer and respond to them by offering high-quality products. Empowered with such knowledge, he set out on his business voyage. He brought excellent researchers and experts to Jalna. The entire country was the land of his destiny, yet he wished to make Jalna its centre. He succeeded in making it happen.

Badrinarayanji has shown strong commitment and support to public welfare activities. He has championed many social causes. In 1962, while JES College was being built, people had to cope with various problems. Many temporary arrangements were made. Teachers were given two rooms of Rashtriya Hindi School to conduct lectures. However, the construction of JES College stopped at the plinth stage owing to unavailability of asbestos sheets for roofing. The sheets weren't available in the market because most of the supplies were sent to the Indian army during the Indo-China war. As the head of the construction committee of JES College, Badrinaray-anji was responsible for most of the work. Seth Bansilal facilitated the funds to build the college. The amount allocated to buy the sheets was not enough. It was difficult to raise funds immediately

to make a full payment for the sheets. After Shri Nagbhushan of Aurangabad arrived in Jalna, he surveyed the construction site. He learned about the unavailability of asbestos sheets. On the very next day, he sent two trucks of asbestos sheets to the construction site. The college was in no condition to make a full payment, yet Shri Nagbhushan co-operated and provided the sheets. Seth Rustomji Jalnawala supplied the iron required to support the sheets. All problems were sorted out in eight days; the construction progressed as planned. Latifbhai of Hind Welding Works, Jalna, shaped the steel to make fittings for the roof and fixed it at no cost. Students gave a helping hand to lift the sheets over the rooms. Thus, the roofing job was completed in a day. Not a single sheet was damaged! The college became a symbol of the power of unity. If one determined hand rises to an occasion, many hands join it and become a fist of steel capable of accomplishing even the most difficult task.

Shri Ganapati Netralaya is the outcome of Badrinarayanji's selfless concern for others. He knew that there was a general tendency among the rural folk to neglect their health. He was also aware of the inconveniences caused due to the lack of good and reliable medical facilities in rural areas. In 1987, he underwent a similar experience after he contracted cataract. The facility to perform laser surgery to treat cataract was then available only in two hospitals of which one was in Mumbai and the other was in Chennai. After receiving the treatment, he realized it was a fairly quick procedure.

This touched the humanitarian chord within him. A

year and a half later, on 31 December 1992, a

fully-equipped Shri Ganapati Netralaya

was opened to the public. This was

the first high-tech hospi-

tal in Marathwada to

provide a compre-

hensive range of eye

care services. It was

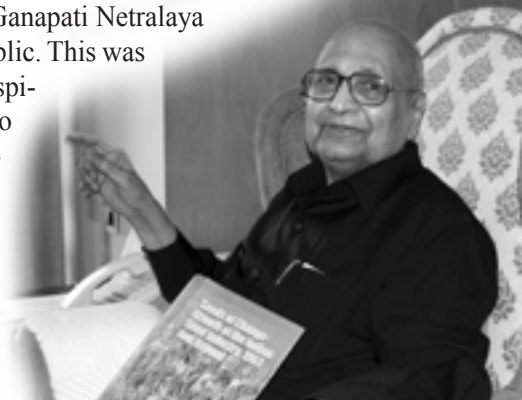
built on 7.5 acres of

land granted by the

state government

for a token amount.

It now occupies an



expansive area of 1,75,000 sq. ft.

Badrinarayan Barwale College is another of his invaluable contributions to the society. In 1996, the Mahyco Research Foundation took the incentive from Padma Vibhushan recipient Shri Govindbhai Shroff to start Badrinarayan Barwale College. The college was established with the vision of providing the high-quality education to students. Among the subjects taught at this college are Biotechnology, Microbiology, and Computer Science.

Golden Jubilee School, an English-medium school, is another of his ambitious projects for making quality education accessible to the children of Jalna. GJS is situated within city limits and spans across 35 acres of spacious landscape. Usha. B. Zehr, his daughter, is the school's administrator. Under her guidance, GJS aims to promote the moral, physical, and intellectual development of its students. The school's unique educational system encourages the development of communication skills, and independent and logical thinking among its students. It is a one of its kind school in Jalna based on the CBSE model and offers nursery through class 12. Its mission is to develop well-rounded students.

Shri Barwale's is a man with a grand vision, who inspires awe and wonder through his conversations and ideas. He finds the present generation of youngsters to be very promising. He recalls the days when one had to wait for hours to speak on the telephone and international mail took months to deliver. He considers the advances in present-day communication systems to be of great importance. He sees advancement as a continuous process. He cannot stand the gloomy outlook of others. He says that the new generation is adapting to new systems. He says, 'We need to change according to the needs of our country. The success of Green Revolution was a landmark achievement for us. The farmer of today is changing and moving towards alternative crops. This is the indication of progress.'

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Shri Badrinarayan Barwale, Mahyco, Dawalwadi, Jalna



1

In 1998, a youngster from Jalna walked into the office of the renowned brokerage firm, Motilal Oswal, to get a sub-broker terminal. Although he appeared to be quite young, he was a qualified CA with a fairly good knowledge of stock trading. He spoke with great confidence on the subject of stock markets and discussed the potentiality of commodity markets. However, his request was turned down. The persistent youth did not give up. He went to the office of another leading brokerage house, MSKI (now Sharekhan), to meet its CEO, Tarunbhai Shah. In the talks that ensued, he expressed

his interest to work as a sub-broker and also spoke at length on commodity markets. Mr. Shah probably saw a spark in the youth. Without brushing aside their discus-

sions, he agreed to grant the youngster

a sub-broker terminal. He also shared a few words of wisdom and caution with the youth.

Thus, he entered the world of stock trading. Today, he is best known as the founder of Adinath Stock Broking Pvt. Ltd.

The youth's name is Paresh Runwal. He is the

Jalna Stock Exchange!

Paresh N. Runwal

Mumbai is the economic hub of India where the NSE and BSE account for a majority of the trading volume in the country. Adinath Stock Broking Pvt. Ltd. in Jalna has emerged as the only independently-operated brokerage firm outside of Mumbai that has the membership of several exchanges. Its founder is Paresh Runwal. The story tells of how he carved his own future in the stock-trading business.



son of Shri Nemichand Runwal of Jalna, the owner of the well-known company, Hastimal Shantilal & Company. Shri Nemichand has proven himself to be a successful businessman by managing an oil mill and the business of kirana goods. Paresh was born on 27 November 1973 in his grandparental home in Vaijapur. He majored in Commerce at JES College and topped the class 12 board exams in accounts with a 99% score. His mother, Smt. Satyavati, expected him to become as successful as Madhu Bhakkad, a then prominent CA of Jalna. Paresh wanted to live up to his mother's expectations.

Paresh planned his career path wisely. He wanted to major in Commerce from Pune's BMCC College. He left for Pune with his friend Ritesh Saklecha. While they were on the way to BMCC College, they came across Symbiosis College. Charmed by its campus, they promptly decided to apply to Symbiosis College. After entering the premises of the college, they noticed a very long queue of applicants. To put an end to the uncertainty of getting admitted to Symbiosis, they met the principal of the college, Smt. Veena Yadav. Impressed by Paresh's score, she gave him special preference to grant him admission to Symbiosis. After completing the procedure for admission, they went to Hirachand Nemchand Digambar Jain Hostel. Surendra Gandhi, the rector of the hostel, was known as a strict disciplinarian. He had once rusticated the director's nephew on disciplinary grounds. Paresh had to make several attempts to win the rector's confidence before he gained admission to the hostel. Thus, he embarked on his academic journey.

In 1996, a change in rules allowed students to pursue a CA foundation course and a B.Com. degree concurrently. Paresh was delighted as he never intended to spend five years in education. He joined the CA foundation course. He took lessons from Shri Zhavre, who was a stern man and an excellent teacher. Paresh was studious, but he was also shy by nature owing to his rustic Marathwada background. He was good at his studies. This gradually boosted his confidence. He soon became a front runner from a backbencher. Paresh rarely liked to be disturbed while he was studying. He wanted to avoid the distractions of his many friends at the hostel. He took special efforts to get permission to study in the library of Pune University. He spent most of his time studying in the quiet of the library. Taking notice

of Paresh's sincere efforts, R. Surendra Gandhi relaxed the hostel's timings for him by issuing him a special pass. In the period 1996 to 1998, Paresh earned his B.Com., M.Com., and CA degrees. The way in which he managed his studies is commendable.

Paresh returned to Jalna in 1998. He became obsessed with opening a Colour Lab — a facility not available in Jalna back then, but his plan was strongly opposed by his parents. They could not tolerate the fact that their son, who was well-qualified to be a CA, was planning to enter the business of photo printing. However, he stuck to his decision and bought a second-hand machine worth 17 lakh rupees from Singapore to set up Photofine Colour Lab. His project was funded by his generous grandfather of Vijapur. Paresh says, 'The help received from others is definitely important, but the help received from the family proves to be more useful.' The colour lab did good business. To cope with the heavy workload, the machines had to be run for 24 hours by operators, who worked in shifts. The success of the lab prompted him to open another lab in Old Jalna. He later started a third lab in Barhanpur, which was the hometown of his brother's in-laws. It was in this period that the previously mentioned meeting between Paresh and Mr. Shah took place, and his career took a new turn.

Paresh knew the ins and outs of the share bazaar business. After he got a sub-broker terminal from Sharekhan, he started to work in Jalna. After working for three and a half years with Sharekhan, his business dealings with Sharekhan started to increase. He looked for other options. He entered into a business tie-up with Bonanza Portfolio Ltd. Sharekhan offered him membership of NSE for five lakh rupees in 2001, but he turned down the offer as it was quite expensive. Instead, he opted for membership of BSE and NSE through Bonanza Portfolio Ltd. After 2003, Paresh started specializing in commodity broking and providing related products and services. This was Paresh's long-held dream. On 24 September 2003, he obtained the NSE Commodity Exchange Course Certificate. To capitalise on his immense knowledge of the subject, he was inducted into the NSE panel to formulate the guidelines for commodity broking.

Gradually, Paresh became a stock-broker by acquiring the membership of recognized stock exchanges. He is now a broker for mul-

tipple institutions, including BSE, NSE, MCX, NCDEX, MCX-SX, CDSL and USE. According to CRISIL's Broker Grading, Adinath is rated as a competent brokerage firm. Adinath is perhaps the only brokerage house outside Mumbai that has the membership of several exchanges. A humble setup of two computers has today become a full-fledged enterprise to provide quality services to investors.

Paresh is the go-to person on the nitty-gritty of stock market and the mathematics of turnovers. Paresh has navigated Adinath through the turbulence of share and equity markets by virtue of Risk Preventive Management. While commenting on those who failed in the business, he says, 'They came, they erred, and they sank!' The exchange business is monitored by SEBI. Paresh adheres strictly to the regulations set by SEBI in his dealings with clients. One of the most important rules laid by SEBI that he has abided by is of not crossing the permissible 'limit'. Even if the investor is a family member, the business is done strictly according to the rules. There is no room for a credit system, whoever the client may be. Paresh cannot stand lateness on working days. He recalls the time the market crashed after BJP got a drubbing in the elections and Congress came to power. Stockbroker's limits were then curtailed on a nation-wide scale. However, Adinath was doing good business owing to the growing demand for inexpensive shares for which people literally queued up with ready cash! Paresh made some blunders on that day but they weren't too serious; however, he took it as a learning opportunity. His firm presently oversees the business of 110 terminals. The business of each of Adinath's terminals is connected to a single server. Paresh carefully supervises the entire business. This demanding business is run by Adinath from morning 9 o'clock till midnight.

Paresh provides a liberal environment in the office to enable his employees to cope effectively with the stressful business. The employees are not overburdened with any targets, and therefore, they do not have to call clients repeatedly to pursue them to make investments. Paresh values his clients greatly. He does not believe in misleading or sweet-talking his clients to make investments. He says that clients should be given the freedom of choice to make investment decisions. He considers trust as a key factor for retaining clients.

Paresh attributes his success to his grandfather and parents. He says that he has learned from them to observe discipline in his life and business. He gives utmost credit to the stock market software he uses as part of his long-term strategy. It is a highly responsive and effective application that allows him to monitor and handle the business on multiple fronts. Very few companies have this piece of software. He says that it is a very reliable tool to safeguard the interests of his clients. The price of the software is 70 lakh rupees and its AMC is seven lakh rupees! Paresh takes great care to maintain the KYC (Know Your Customer) of nearly 3000 clients. He plans to digitize this information when his customer count reaches 5000. A single KYC can contain nearly 40– to 50 pages. The broker is held responsible for any discrepancies related to the KYC.

In addition to managing Adinath Stock Broking Pvt. Ltd., Adinath Commodities, and Photofine Colour Lab, Paresh oversees the operations of a newly found ginning mill in Gundewadi, Bhumi Cotton Pvt. Ltd. As soon as the licensing policy for new private ginning factories came into effect, a farsighted Paresh started the ginning mill. The mill is running successfully. In order to extract oil from seeds that are expelled in the ginning process, he has started an oil mill under the banner of Runwal Industries in MIDC area.

This farsighted, resourceful, and 38-year-old young man has



made an annual turnover of 8000 crore rupees. By using his forecasting abilities to take decisions and by executing his plans expertly, he has revived the identity of Jalna as the cradle of wealth and fortune. He plans to build a new office, which will have all the facilities, in a large plot in MIDC by the end of this year. While pursuing Risk Management and leading his companies, he sticks to one principle: it is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.

As a person who is responsive to the changing times, Paresh Runwal has grand plans to expand his business, but his business headquarter will be only in Jalna!

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Paresh Nemichandji Runwal

Adinath Stock Broking Pvt. Ltd., Runwal Complex,
New Mondha, Jalna



2

The Grand Vision

Dr Sanjay Rakh

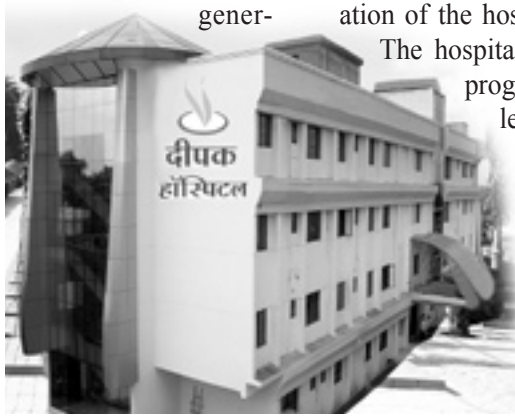
Dr. Sanjay Shankarrao Rakh is an eminent figure in the medical circles of Jalna. He is committed to provide the latest and finest healthcare facilities to the people of Jalna. He is a man of vision who works very hard to fulfil his dreams, but regardless of whether they are related to the medical or the social fields, the common man is always at their epicentre.

“Our mission is to make all medical treatments accessible even to the most common man of Jalna District. We have succeeded in offering highly-effective healthcare solutions for diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of various diseases. We have tackled big financial challenges to introduce the latest technologies into the hospital on several occasions. I am now chasing a dream envisioned by my mother of setting up a cancer hospital in Jalna along the lines of Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai. I look forward to the day when God grants me that power...” These are the words of Dr Sanjay Rakh,

who oversees the administration of Deepak Hospital, a well-known hospital located in town hall area of Jalna. He belongs to the second generation of the hospital’s administration.

The hospital has made incredible progress under Dr Sanjay’s leadership.

A huge river originates from small streams. The Rakh family too made a small beginning when they began their journey through the world of



healthcare. Dr Shankarrao Rakh embarked on his medical career on 8 December 1963 by starting a hospital in Mutha building, Jalna. In March 1964, he started a general hospital in Laxmi building where he offered his services for four years. He later moved to a spacious hospital in Jalna's town hall area. The hospital was fully-equipped with a range of facilities, including an operation theatre, maternity ward, an x-ray facility, and a high-tech laboratory for performing clinical tests.

While this progress continued under Dr Rakh's able headship, new developments were taking place on the family front. Sanjay was born on 16 October 1965. He attended Saraswati Kindergarten till class 2 and went to a boarding school in Nasik till class 5. Thereafter, he acquired education at Dr Antonio D'Silva High School in Mumbai. He got admitted to Jalna's JES College where he pursued higher secondary education. He earned his MBBS degree in 1988 and MS degree in 1991 from Government Medical College, Aurangabad. Later, he left for Mumbai to pursue a career in healthcare. He was offered a job by a famous hospital in Mumbai, but he worked there for a very short period. Determined to provide medical services to the people of his hometown, he quit his job and returned to Jalna. He received the support of his wife Dr Anuradha Rakh, who was a paediatrician by profession, to start a Surgical Dept. and a Paediatric Dept. in 1993. The surgical facility developed fully in 1995. They started two Intensive Care Units (ICU) and a Sonography facility in 1996. Later, they started a high-tech store in the premises of the hospital, which was open to customers 24/7. The store became popular for offering reasonably-priced medicines. Deepak Hospital currently has nine specialized departments for diagnosis



and treatment of its patients: Obstetrics and Gynaecology, General Surgery, Paediatric, ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat), Radiology, Medicine, Orthopaedic, Anaesthesiology, and Pathology.

When he was returning to Jalna from Mumbai, he dreamed of a fully-equipped, self-sufficient, and state-of-the-art hospital in Jalna. His dream was gradually becom-

ing real. In 2006, it appeared in its most impressive form as a brand-new and grand complex.

“A hospital is more than just a counselling or treatment centre for doctors and their patients. It is a shrine of health and vitality. A part of patient’s illness should disappear as soon as the patient steps in this temple. After entering, the warm and welcoming reception of Deepak Hospital evokes confidence. The spacious and huge waiting halls on each floor inspire a positive and open-minded attitude towards life. A patient immediately experiences a feeling of betterment and relief when consulting a doctor,. There are cameras installed almost everywhere to ensure safety and security. The fully-computerized business and billing leave no room for doubt or speculation regarding the patient’s treatment.” Dr Sanjay describes his accomplished dreams before our very eyes.

Dr Sanjay is reasonably proud of the hospital’s services. A team of highly-experienced doctors available 24/7, an Emergency Dept., and a Neurosurgery facility for performing complex brain surgeries, are ready with the most modern medical equipment to treat patients. The Dept. of Radiology has diagnostic imaging services such as Open MRI, Spiral CT Scan, Colour Doppler Test, and Digital X-ray to visually identify and treat diseases. The Open MRI facility affordably priced at 2000 rupees and within the reach of all sections of society, is a feather in the hospital’s cap. The hospital’s Dept. of Medicine supports facilities for 2d Echo, Colour Doppler, Stress test, etc. The Surgical Dept., and the Doppler and Sonography facilities are adjacent to the Maternity Dept. having two maternity rooms to ensure that prospective mothers get proper treatment. The up-to-date Orthopaedic Dept. deals with accidents, fractures, spinal disorders, and bone diseases like osteoporosis and arthritis. Deepak Hospital is the first hospital in Jalna to start an ICU with 19 beds. It is also the first hospital to introduce facilities for bronchoscopy and surgery of cancer in Jalna. Additionally, the hospital has an Infertility clinic, and a Urology dept. for treating diseases related to the urinary tract such as kidney stones.

Dr Sanjay has strived hard to make every possible medical service available to the people of Jalna. He has recently set up the Cardiac Cath Lab with high-tech imaging equipment where lifesav-

ing procedures such as coronary angiography and angioplasty can be performed on heart patients.

Among the hospital's vital services is the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), which specializes in the treatment of critically unwell and premature newly-born infants. It integrates a host of modern facilities, including eight radiant warmers, phototherapy, and monitoring systems. Even the previously inaccessible neonatal ventilator facility meant for infants, for which people headed to other metropolitan cities, is available at Deepak Hospital. The hospital has a Nursing Mother's Room to assist mothers in feeding milk to their children. It also has a Paediatric Dept. Deepak has no dearth of medical services and addresses every possible inconvenience of its patients.

There is an advanced operating theatre adjoined by the pre-operative and post-operative holding areas on the third floor of the hospital. Modern sterilization equipment, central AC, epoxy-coated walls for an aseptic environment, superior operating theatre lights, and the emergency generator facility, exemplify the high standards of healthcare services maintained at Deepak. Another of the hospital's essential services is the Mobile ICU for monitoring, sustaining, and safely transferring critical patients to other hospitals for providing special medical care and treatment. The vehicle is integrated with an artificial respirator (ventilator), defibrillator, oxygen and monitoring facilities. A team of paramedics and nurses is put on standby for this 'ICU on wheels'.

These all are the technical aspects. What is Dr Sanjay's outlook towards these developments? Dr Sanjay is carrying forward the legacy of healthcare inherited from his parents. His social awareness stems from his parental upbringing. While he is fully aware that a doctor's profession is highly revered by society, he is equally sensitive to the difficulties and hardships faced by some sections of the society. Asked what is his recipe for success, he replied, "I attribute my success to the blessings of my parents and Deepak Hospital's dedicated team of doctors, nurses, experts... in fact, the entire team of Deepak. This was hardly possible without their valuable contribution."

Dr Sanjay Rakh shares two incidents which show his genuine

concern for people.

The first incident took place when Dr Sanjay was pursuing his MS degree from Government Medical College, Aurangabad. When he was returning to Jalna from Aurangabad, 4-5 people escorting a boy stopped his car near Shekta. They said, 'Mulala pan lagla aahe'. At first, Dr Sanjay did not understand their local parlance. They actually meant that the boy was bitten by a snake. After Dr Sanjay realised this, he quickly huddled them in his car, and his wife Dr Anuradha took the wheel. As they approached Chikhalthana, Dr Sanjay sensed the boy's pulse was weakening. Immediately, he performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on the boy. By the time they reached Ghati, Dr Sanjay realised that the boy's heart was failing him. After they reached Ghati Hospital, he immediately started treating the boy by massaging and giving him injections. He handed over the boy to the hospital's doctors for further treatment. Days later, after Dr Sanjay had forgotten the incident, a woman rushed towards him, fell down at his feet, and said, 'Doctor, my son was saved because of you...' She couldn't stop reiterating how thankful she was to the doctor. Dr Sanjay was nothing short of a God-man for that woman!

The second incident concerns an 18-year-old girl from a place near Sindkhed-Raja. The girl was pregnant, but unfortunately her uterus had ruptured in her abdomen. Because there were no medical facilities in Sindkhed-Raja, her relatives brought her to Jalna; however, nobody in Jalna was ready to handle the case. They approached Dr Sanjay. The girl's case was complicated and life-threatening. The diagnosis revealed that the baby had already died following the uterine rupture and the girl had a very slim chance of surviving. Removing her uterus was the only way to save her. The relatives gave their approval to conduct the operation and accepted the responsibility of any eventuality. Dr Sanjay performed the complex operation expertly. He was successful in saving the girl. Dr Sanjay approached her after she recovered. It was necessary to inform her about her condition. After he disclosed that the child had died, the girl was grief-stricken; however, when he told her that she could no longer bear children, an agonizing expression marked the girl's face. This heart-stirring experience disturbs Dr Sanjay to this day. Although he saved the girl, he regrets deeply at his helplessness

to rescue her from the catastrophic loss. There was nothing the doctor could have done for the girl except for praying to God.

Dr Sanjay tries to find time from his busy schedule for social activities. Besides giving his time to various banks, and educational and medical institutions, he is at the forefront of organising community events and programmes like Jalna Ganesh Festival. He considers the entire staff of Deepak Hospital as his extended family. He tells, 'It is not possible to obtain anything worthwhile in life without dreaming and working hard to fulfil the dream.' Five years ago, he fulfilled his grand dream of a fully-equipped multispecialty hospital in Jalna. His next plan is to fulfil his mother's vision, which was born from compelling reasons. Her father had pancreatic cancer, but the family was financially challenged to provide him adequate medical treatment. He died an excruciating death in Mumbai's Tata Hospital. This motivated Dr Sanjay to take up the challenge of starting a hospital for treating cancer patients. His other dream is to develop an old-age home and an orphanage in one place. There are two reasons behind this: Firstly, the children who are deprived of parental love will receive the guidance and affection of elders; Secondly, the elders, who are abandoned by their children, won't feel lonely or depressed in the company of youngsters.

The city is extremely fortunate to have selfless and caring people like Dr Sanjay Rakh, who pursue dreams for the well-being of its residents and work hard to make them a reality.

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Dr Sanjay Rakh

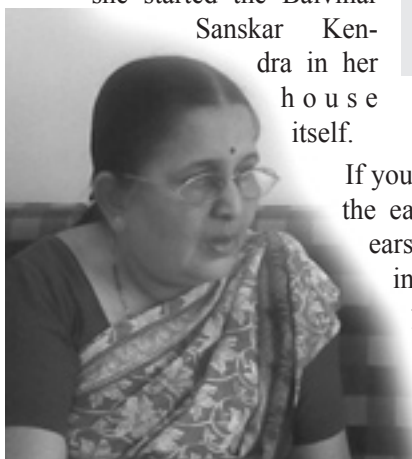
Deepak Hospital, Near Town Hall, Jalna



3

The first ten years of childhood are the formative years for a child's development. In the first five years, a child's mind is akin to potter's clay. It is very receptive to learning new skills and developing new habits. This is precisely when a value-based study program can do wonders to the child's overall development. However, the commercialization of education has coldly turned its blind eye to these concerns. This drove Mrs. Vishakha Vinaykumar Deshpande to take action. In 1996, for the sole purpose of providing children a solid foundation through value-based education, she started the Balvihar

Sanskar Kendra in her house itself.



Disciplined Upbringing

Vishakha Deshpande

A value-based education system for holistic child development is the real need of the hour, but most schools are overlooking its importance. As a result, children in relatively small cities like Jalna are deprived of good schooling. The insensitive educational scenario finally motivated Vishakha to establish the Balvihar Sanskar Kendra. As a proactive woman spirited by a social cause, Mrs. Deshpande skilfully passes on the legacy of disciplined and positive upbringing, gifted by her mother, to the city's children.

If you ever travel by Kacheri Road in the early morning hours, keep your ears open to the Saubhadra building, opposite the house of a lawyer Mr. Jafrabadkar. You hear the sounds of children reciting poems and multiplication tables, coming from atop the building. Your guess is right;

however, this is more than just a regular school.

As you walk up the staircase of the Saubhadra buiding, you glance at the boards—‘Parijat’, ‘Gulab’, ‘Sadabahar’, ‘Angels’, and many others. You soon discover them to be different classroom names. The classrooms are occupied by children aged 3–5 years, studying in Marathi and English mediums, attentively scribbling on their slates. Growing under the watchful eyes of Mrs. Vishakha, you will immediately find these kids appealing. Unlike other school kids their age who generally indulge in mischief, these children are busy in number recognition, alphabet recognition, studying general knowledge, and drawing.

Vishakha was born at her grandparental home in Hyderabad. Her father, a deputy collector, during his service, was transferred to many different places in Marathwada. Thus, Vishakha received schooling from Osmanabad, Parbhani, Latur and other cities. In 1977, when her father was deputed in Parbhani, she was married to Jalna’s Vinaykumar Deshpande. After spending fifteen years in family life and raising kids, Vishakha began mulling over the idea of a ‘Sanskar kendra’. In the meantime, she also birthed a second ‘medically special’ child. While raising the boy, she discussed her plans to start the Sanskar Kendra with her husband which received his full support. They enthusiastically advertised the opening of the school, and Vishakha received enrolments of nearly twenty-five



children. The school kicked off and there was no looking back.

In the beginning, the school syllabus wasn't pre-planned and it was neither based on a conventional teaching outline. Vishakha's vision was to impart discipline and value-based education to children. In the first two months, children were taught to sit in a row, and to neatly line up their footwear. They were also given lessons for behaving well at home. Gradually, they were taught basic letter and number recognition skills. Vishakha never encouraged rote learning. It was not compulsory for the children to know the count to 100. They were expected to learn to count from 1 to 20, and to correctly identify any of these numbers whenever questioned. A similar rule applied to alphabet recognition. In time, the children got accustomed to periodic tests which helped assess their comprehension skills and intelligence quotient. Vishakha found the test results most useful in her discussions with parents.

New activities were being introduced as the school steadily took shape. The regular morning prayers were followed by a drill. For two-days a week, Vishakha engaged the children in age-appropriate activities such as drawing and craft to encourage creativity. The children picked up new skills like chanting of shlokas, Maruti stotra, and Ganapati stotra. They also developed the etiquette of chanting the prayer 'Vadini Kaval Gheta...' before taking meals. Vishakha had successfully created an educational and disciplinary environment that promoted good manners. This was truly a 'Sanskar' school. Parents noticed the change in their children, and Vishakha received a likewise response from them.

Vishakha's road to success wasn't very easy. It was a big challenge to train children from different economic, social, and cultural backgrounds. However, Vishakha succeeded with her flair for teaching and handling children. In just a few years, there was a noticeable increase in student numbers. Vishakha alerted herself. She never intended minting money by packing classrooms. Implementing the policy of 'first-come, first-served', she accepted only the first two-hundred admissions which simplified further planning. The children were sorted into different classrooms on an age-wise basis. In due time, new teachers joined the Sanskar Kendra which required a reasonable increment in fees to pay off their salaries, but this was

little compared to the quality of value-based education the children received.

The school had firmly established itself, and many advised Vishakha to develop the school even further and offer education at least up to 5th class. However, Vishakha ignored these suggestions. She neither wanted to expand the school, nor avail of any government grants. Vishakha consistently defended her vision of running a highly-efficient school and creating a new generation of morally sound and well-groomed individuals.

During this period, Vishakha gained many new experiences. In an existing ill-mannered society, she had the courage to teach good manners and discipline to a new generation. She says, 'Nowadays, parent's everywhere often grumble that their children never listen. However, the fault lies with the parents. It is alright to praise children, but don't get excessively lenient with them or pamper them. Get them used to denial...' In this school two punishments are mete out to children. The first punishment is a delay of ten minutes in mealtime, and the second one is standing on the seat. It isn't all work and no play in the school. Here the children celebrate all Indian festivals with great joy and enthusiasm. The partition between adjacent halls is removed to create a large hall and everyone gathers to celebrate Sankrant, Daserra, Diwali, birth anniversaries of great figures, and many other important festivals. Thus, the rich and valuable legacy of Indian traditions is skilfully passed over to the children.

There are certain expectations from the parents too. The children spend three hours in school, and the remaining 21 hours they are at home or with their parents. Is it possible to guide them in 3 hours on how they should behave for the next 21 hours? Therefore, parents also need to actively co-operate for the child's disciplining and development. Vishakha is confident that if the parents take a little effort, they can bring considerable positive change in their children. In her seventeen years of the school's administration, Vishakha has also made some relevant observations. She strongly opposes the semi-English medium of education and advises parents to educate their children in either Marathi- or English-mediums, at least up to 5th class. Later, they may opt for semi-English medium of education, because by then the children reach the required intellectual

maturity.

Children are innocent and unpolluted by worldly needs. They are happy in their own world. They enjoy frolicking with their peers. The upbringing and education received in their first ten years serves them as a foundation for a lifetime. Vishakha is now looking for a large area near the school's premises. She believes a playground where the children could indulge in outdoor sports will further enhance their development.

Vishakha's vision embodies what the great philosopher Aristotle once said, 'Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.'

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Vishakha Deshpande



A Recipe for Success

Priya Pramod Joshi

Priya had no idea that her casual cooking for a neighbour would one day lead to a serious business. With her husband's business approach, she started serving to local food orders and thus gave birth to Ruchi Products. The following is the story of Priya's mouth-watering journey.

“ I recall the days when my mother asked for help in the kitchen and I would slip away to my friend on the pretext of studying. I hardly helped her to sift the pulses. Any household chore was never my cup of tea. Instead, I preferred wandering with my friend. However, things changed after marriage. My husband, a food-lover and a fairly good cook, enjoyed eating rich and savoury dishes. At times, noticing my boredom he cooked the food himself, but this really discomfited me. It was after all my responsibility to keep him happy. Then, I started preparing different food items. Thus, I developed

an interest in cooking and finally entered the food business” says

Priya Joshi, head of ‘Ruchi’ whose food products are in high demand in Jalna’s markets. The business operates from a small house in the Bhagyana-gar area of Old Jalna.

Priya starts her busy gastronomic affair by tucking her saree’s fold in the waistline. Under her direction,



her cooperative female associates prepare various food items to satisfy the insatiable appetite of food-lovers!

In the past, womenfolk would come together to prepare papads, kurdai, pickles, kharodya, and many food items. It was a common practice in villages as well as big cities. The wide assortment of only papads included sago (sabudana) papad, jowar papad, wheat-extract papad, udad papad, moong papad and many other varieties! In time, the papad-making practice almost disappeared leaving behind a potential market for papads and pickles. Is an Indian meal complete without some crispy and spicy accompaniments? Thus, many commercial initiatives sprung up to cater to these demands, and Jalna's Ruchi Products also forayed into food business.

Priya's hails from Khamgaon. Her maiden name is Ranjana Prabhakar Kulkarni. She duly completed her education and graduated with a B.Com. degree. In 1990, she was married to Jalna's Pramod Joshi. Encouraged by her husband's support, Priya applied for an external MA degree program and got her Master's degree in Social Work.

In 1996, Priya started receiving orders for the food items she had prepared on the occasion of her daughter's birthday. This was truly the dawn of Priya's culinary journey. In those times, they were staying in a traditional mansion (wada) of Old Jalna. Which had 10–12 houses. In the beginning, Priya prepared potato papads. Many people liked her potato papads and started requesting for them. Finally, Pramod's persuasion and encouragement pushed her to carefully package the papads and sell them. This received a good response and her papads sold off in no time. Slowly her products started moving out of the mansion. More orders started coming in from nearby homes and fulfilling them became a tiring experience for Priya. Priya became fairly ambitious and decided to offer more products. Alongside papads, she also started preparing puffed jowar, amaranth (rajgira) flour and many other food items. She received regular orders for nearly 10–12 different products. Priya decided to take her venture a step further. She began marketing her products. She approached shopkeepers and requested them to stock her products to which many agreed. She now started paying more attention to the packaging.

Priya was becoming aware of the nitty-gritty of the business. She registered her small-scale industry with the SSI, and also acquired the mandatory food licence from the Food and Drug Administration. The brand name was aptly named as 'Ruchi' and its products started showing up in many stores.

Priya was off to a flying start. She further diversified her product line by adding fasting items prepared from baghaar, sabudana, groundnuts, potatoes and rajgira. The potato papads and sabudana papads became Ruchi's specialities. Sun-dried preparations like kurvadi and kharodi were also being produced. Ruchi Product's now offered various items, including wheat papad, rice papad, jowar papad, rajgira laddoo, rajgira cake (vadi), chilli pickle, lemon pickle, and mango pickle.

Priya's earnings boosted her confidence and thus her creativity, but there is no gain without pain. Priya had to brave the challenges and uncertainties of a business. Except for some familiar shopkeepers, many others rudely snubbed her. Some retailers refused to carry her products whereas some haggled for unreasonable rates. Priya even had to bear unpleasant remarks such as 'Your products have no buyers' and 'The product's packaging is inferior'. Some shops that did keep her products simply put them aside, and so they were never sold. Priya had to bear the loss of throwing away the expired goods. These were testing times for Priya, and she underwent many bitter experiences. There were also others who kindly helped her on the grounds of being a hard-working woman, but most other times she faced difficulties. Priya bought wholesale cereals, sago etc. from big markets as it was affordable, but when short of cash just by 40–50 rupees, she had to return home, manage the money, again reach the market, and buy the goods. However, those days of inconvenience are over. Nowadays, a purchase worth 20–25 thousand rupees can be made with a single phone call. In fact, if a purchase isn't made for several days, the trader himself makes a follow-up call.

Priya was often posed with sexist queries. 'Is your husband unemployed?' 'Has he lost his job?' 'Did he not receive his dues?' They seemed to undermine a woman's abilities and potential. Necessity is not the only reason for a woman to take up a business initiative! When Priya went out for door-to-door sales, she had both encourag-

ing and discouraging experiences. Whenever she was disheartened, she recollected her positive experiences and put her mind to work.

Priya once availed a loan from SBI for bulk purchasing which soon expended owing to unfavourable market conditions. When the payment of instalments stopped, the bank issued an inquiry. Mr. Shegonse was the branch manager. He gently investigated the matter. He gave his guidance and moral support. He offered some valuable suggestions for the packaging. He advised hiring a salesman for field sales and marketing, setting sales targets, and provided useful business tips. As the conditions improved, Priya was able to repay the loan. Priya gratefully acknowledges the help received from Shri. Doiphode and Shri. Joshi of Zilla Udyog Kendra. Mr. Doiphode had apprised Priya of the loan facility and also helped her secure the loan for buying new machines and building production units. She also expresses her gratitude towards the Parivar's supermarket chain in Jalna, for extending support and putting efforts to sell her products.

In the course of these events, Priya attended training programmes conducted by Zilla Udyog Kendra at Aurangabad, Parbhani, and Jalna, and thus applied the skills in her business. She was invited by Zilla Udyog Kendra to conduct training and share her experience with the trainees. In fact, in the last couple of years she conducted several training-programmes aiming to empower women for financial freedom. Alongside training for the production of puffed rice, flattened jowar (poha), popcorn, juices, and jams, she also trained the women for vermicomposting (Gandul Khat Nirmiti).

Priya's business has grown to the scale of Jalna city. It would not be an exaggeration to mention that each household in Jalna has tasted at least one of Priya's products. Priya still has bigger plans to develop her business. Any business demands certain adjustments, self-control, cool temperament, and a sweet tongue, and Priya has definitely perfected the art. She agrees that one must learn to deal and cope with all types of people, be they young or less-intelligent, for the sake of business. She clearly indicates her lofty ambitions for business expansion.

Priya's message for women is to gain financial freedom. She disapproves of stereotypes who don vermillion on their foreheads, wear mangalsutras around the neck, and nag their husbands for not giving

enough money to manage household expenses. She urges to show empathy for their husbands and shoulder financial responsibilities with them. ‘Do some similar kind of business and become independent,’ she says, ‘Respect and self-esteem, will automatically follow. Once a woman is employed her children also gain confidence.’ This is Priya’s philosophy. She wants to support needy women by employing them, and thus contribute to their livelihood and progress. With this vision, she is planning to buy a big plot in Jalna’s new industrial zone and is determined to sell her products in every district of Maharashtra.

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Priya Pramod Joshi



Ruchi Products, 41, Bhagyana-
gar, Old Jalna, Jalna

Mohd. Yousuf-bhai vividly recalls the past. He tells, “My father worked as a feeder at Umar Oil Mill. In 1947, with India’s independence came its partition. Umar Seth, the mill’s owner, sold the mill and left for Pakistan. The mill’s new owner named it Saraf Mill. My father got to keep his job, but he always dreamt of his own shop. In 1958–59, he set up his kirana store in a 990 square-feet shopping-bay of Old Jalna’s vegetable market – Mohammed Yousuf Ahmedbhai...”

At 68 years of age, Mohd. Yousuf-miyan is presently free from all commercial responsibilities. His children and nephews manage the complete business. He was hardly six years of age when his father started the shop, yet his early memories are still fresh. The shop was located in a well-colonized area and did good business. However, any business can run into a risk. As fate

**Mohd. Yousuf Haji
Ahmed-bhai**

In 1958–59, Ahmedbhai, a feeder in an oil mill, dared to fulfil his long-held dream to open his shop. Today, his third generation owns Jalna’s biggest supermarket chain. A small venture with a turnover of thousands has become a business which churns out crores. This is an inspirational story of a closely-knit family of Kutchi Memons who have kept their faith in the business while merging with the city’s culture.



would have it, a great misfortune befell and the liability of a huge loan burdened his father. Yousuf-bhai recollects those days. The stressful atmosphere at home was near the breaking point. His father was very afraid and restless. At this critical juncture, some of Jalna's eminent figures came to their rescue. Breaking the religious barriers were Ratanlal Hariram, Ghanshyamdas Narayandas Panch, Sitaram Rameshwardas, Swaroop-seth Runwal, and Seth Dhanraj Pannalal. Even today, Yousuf-bhai knows these names by heart. They sent all the required merchandise to the shop. In fact, many loaded carts had lined up outside their shop. The tragedy was averted and soon the shop prospered.

Yousuf-bhai was born in Jalna on 7 June 1953. It was in his schooldays that his father had started the shop. Bashir, his elder brother, also attended school. Bashir was good at his studies, and enjoyed everyone's adoration. As the business grew, their father required a helping hand for running the shop. After matriculating in 1971, Yousuf-miyan gave up higher studies, and started tending the shop with his father. He was later joined by his younger brother Yakub, who had graduated with a B.Com. degree. Managed by the brothers, the shop gained popularity. Ahmed-bhai slowly shifted his attention from the shop's day-to-day affairs; however, he kept in its overall business.

In 1982, there was a new twist to the business. In observance of the Islamic tenets, Ahmed-bhai made preparations for the holy pilgrimage of Hajj. Business decisions were finalised. Bashir was now a doctor, and he had left for Ner-Sevli to start his independent practice. Yousuf-bhai and Yakub-bhai were in charge of the shop. After this allocation, Ahmed-bhai left for Hajj. The children held their father in high esteem and loved the business, but they were also the new-age rebels. They balked to change anything in the presence of Ahmed-bhai. However, after he left for Hajj, major alterations were underway. The shop's planks got replaced by new shutters. The sitting area boasted a display counter. Glass panes were mounted to keep away pests. The interior wall was smashed to make the shop more spacious. The backside of the shop was converted to a godown using some metal sheets. The shop underwent a huge makeover. Ahmed-bhai was returning from Hajj. The brothers were anxious

about their father's reactions. After his arrival, Ahmed-bhai noticed the shop's new look. He heartily welcomed the change and showered praises on Yakub-bhai and Yousuf-bhai. Ayesha Begum, their mother, blessed them and said, 'You will never fall short of anything for seven generations...' It was a moment of great rejoicing.

As the years passed by, the shop flourished. The brotherhood between Yousuf-bhai and Yakub-bhai was a paragon worthy of inviting the evil gaze. Both had a clear understanding of their roles. Yakub-bhai managed the purchase of goods and financial transactions, whereas Yousuf-bhai was responsible for sales. They had great trust in each other. Even after these many years, they have no misgivings between them, and they never interfered in each other's work! In his lifetime, Yousuf-bhai never signed any business' chequebooks because that was Yakub-bhai's work! Yousuf-bhai has great affection for his younger brother Yakub-bhai. Speaking about his brother, Yousuf-bhai tells, 'Even if my face is clouded over with slight worry, he rushes to his sister-in-law and inquires about me.' The days went by. In 1997, it was decided to open a new store in the Shani-Temple Square, and thus 'Sansar Kirana' was set up. The family's younger members were gradually following in their parents' footsteps.

Yousuf-bhai is the father of five. Asif (B.Com.), Ashraf (class 10), Altaf (B.Com.), Anwar (class 10), and Azhar (PhD in Microbiology, MBA in Retail Management) are his children. Yousuf-bhai was happy with only two children; however, his mother kept demanding him to father a girl. When Yakub-bhai fathered a daughter, Yousuf-bhai explained to his mother that he considered Yakub's daughter as his own daughter. Yakub-bhai has a daughter, and two sons named Saber (D. Pharmacy) and Shaker (B.Com.).

The children had grown. The kirana store was their family business. The parents offered career advice to their children. They were told, 'Kirana-Dhool Matino Dhanda (You will get your hands dirty in this small-time business). You need not do what we did.' However, the children decided to join the family business, whereas Azhar enjoyed his professorship at Barwala College. After the children took over the business, Yousuf-bhai willingly retired.

History repeats itself. Like their parents who once brought

change to their grandfather's business, they too were the next generation of modernizers. They were aware of the current business trends. They knew that malls were taking over traditional kirana stores. New entrants to the retail industry were building huge malls with the capital raised from their shareholders' investment. A serious discussion ensued between the family members. After a major financial reckoning, the family reached a unanimous decision to be a part of the new supermarket tradition. The supermarket would be developed on the site of the old shop that was started in 1953. This shop was located in an alley, where neither small four-wheelers nor trucks could enter. Would a supermarket in narrow alley be a worthwhile investment? Many family members had serious doubts. On the other hand, Yousuf-bhai's family was assured of success because they believed in the family's long-standing tradition of integrity, virtues of two generations, and six spirited children. Their belief rang true. The Parivar Supermarket set up in 2002 became popular. The business had a high turnover. Officials from big companies used to drop by the supermarket to witness its success. This was the progressive beginning of a modern vision. The family started setting new milestones on their successful journey. They opened a second branch which received an equally great response. In 2010, Parivar's largest, spacious, and the most ambitious branch opened near Ganesh Ginning Mill of Old Mondha. The computerised supermarket has modernised the rustic landscape.

This was the vision of Yousuf-bhai's son Asif. When attending college for his B.Com. degree, he astutely studied new market trends. Since 1997, he had started brainstorming new ideas. He had understood that the success of malls is attributed to 'Feel Therapy'. Customers like to handle products before buying them, and thus end up spending more liberally. He observed this behaviour in Mumbai, Pune and Aurangabad. He introduced the supermarket-oriented culture in Jalna and succeeded.

There were big risks in the new undertaking. Consumer behaviour in Jalna was quite different. Jalna's people were unaccustomed to such buying habits. Questions arose about customers' satisfaction with this new experience. However, all doubts were dispelled when all branches attracted many customers. The transformation of the

kirana store to a supermarket needed vast amounts of capital. Therefore, other products were also offered besides the regular kirana merchandise. This increased the capital investment, but provided convenience to customers and thus improved sales. The hefty profits helped to raise the capital.

Parivar is known for its clean and unadulterated products that are fairly weighed. In the past, cumin and mustard seeds were winnowed using table fans. This practice continues to this day, but following the expansion of the business, works related to backward integration are carried out at their independent processing centre in Shiraswadi, named Kutumb Udyog. Here, the goods are winnowed, meticulously weighed, and then packed. Yousuf-miyan oversees the operations of Kutumb Udyog. He eats and shares his home-made tiffin with the workers of the centre. Yousuf-bhai says, 'Customer is God.' Asif says, 'Customer is always right.' Strongly committed to his customers, Asif intends to perform newer experiments. Asif has put out feelers to open Parivar's outlets in other cities of Marathwada. By 2012, Parivar will open at least one of its outlets out of Jalna. The three generations of the family have created a novel business philosophy. They believe in the system of joint family, and this faith radiates in the names of their three stores: Sansar, Parivar, and Kutumb. Yousuf-bhai's three-pronged philosophy is: 'Household matters should never cross the threshold', 'Never argue with customers', 'Service and care of one's mother, father, and seniors is above all businesses'. He also warns by saying, 'Maintain trust; Suspicion has no antidote.'

Carrying this tradition, the new generation is marching forward. Many youths like Asif have come forward to drive out the big players in the market. They have formed a state-level association. Collectively, they are putting efforts to increase their bargaining power. In the course of major developments, while sharing profits with the employees, Asif is planning to make them indirect partners. The generous profit-sharing plans for the benefit of their employees display the family's bigheartedness..

Yousuf Ahmed-bhai

Parivar Supermarket, Old vegetable market, Jalna

Jalna Icons / 62

If you ever travel through Jalna's MIDC area, you may come across a three-wheeler pick-up tagged MH-21 8932. There is nothing special about the vehicle, but it is its owner who is one day destined to make it big in Jalna's transport industry. His name is Sanjay Dasharath Kedar. Sanjay was born on 1 June 1975 to Shri Dashrath Kedar of Nagar district's Prabhu-Vadgaon village. Sanjay attended the village's government school up to class 4. Shri Dashrath Kedar was the owner of a dry-land farm which was hardly a source of livelihood. In time,

Shri Dashrath Kedar arrived at Jalna along with his family. Here, he worked as a porter on a contract basis in Jalna's Sahyog Oil Mill. Sanjay's education was also taken care of after he got admission to Jalna's Zilla Parishad High School. After his matriculation, Sanjay attended Matsyodari College with a major in Commerce. Sanjay was not good at his studies and failed his class 12 exams

Sanjay Kedar

Sanjay Kedar is the living proof that the enterprising attitude is not only limited to the industrialists of Jalna. Sanjay's academic years were a bumpy ride, but that hardly stopped him from becoming a successful transport driver. He is presently the owner of two pick-ups, one Bolero jeep, and a six-tyre truck. Soon, he wishes to add a 10-tyre truck to his modest fleet. This is his story...



miserably. Thereafter, he decided to give up higher education.

Sanjay was an industrious youth. During his college days, Sanjay took a part-time job at a colour factory named Tulsi Chemicals. After he discontinued his studies, he began to work full time. He was not the typical incurious worker. He kept himself informed of surrounding events. Many companies in MIDC area were rapidly developing. Their day-to-day business-related work and operations were running smoothly. Sanjay noticed the only problem was the lack of adequate transport facilities. He inferred that he could do good business if he owned a commercial vehicle, and thus dared to buy a three-wheeler pick-up. However, the vehicle was priced at 1,63,000 rupees, and Sanjay could not afford it. He presented his file to the Zilla Udyog Kendra. He finally managed to raise 66,000 rupees, and after taking a loan of 1,10,000 rupees purchased the vehicle in 1999.

Sanjay rode in his new pick-up to MIDC, but met with disappointment. He did not get any work. He was doubtful if his assumption was wrong. He put out some feelers and found out that he was right, and yet he was not getting any work. The following four months were extremely stressful for Sanjay. During this time, he became aware of certain things. He was willing to work hard, but nobody knew him. Who would trust such an inexperienced newcomer? He needed to create contacts. He sincerely kept trying. After four months, he finally made some progress. Sanjay was feeling happy about his decision.

How did Sanjay earn this trust? He did not refuse to do any work. He always completed the work at the appointed time. He never felt offended by any work and even assisted in loading and unloading of goods. He always stayed in touch with everyone. His efforts bore fruit and he hardly got any respite from his increased workload. He now saw plenty of opportunities in his occupation. His confidence had reached a new level. He now had several contacts and received many assignments. He also received the support and guidance of industrialists like Shri Sunil Raithatha. On this basis, he took the big decision to buy another pick-up. In this regard, he took a loan of 1,10,000 rupees from Aurangabad's Sundaram Finance Agency and personally invested 66,000 rupees to purchase another brand

new three-wheeler pick-up numbered MH-21 1480. He handed over the vehicle to his brother Ranjit, who was then working as a porter. Together the brothers worked hard.

By now, they had firmly established themselves in the MIDC area. They easily got work owing to their reliable nature. They managed all types of transport work between Jalna and MIDC area. Everyone was familiar with the way they worked, and therefore, their clients' expectations were also increasing. They were gradually getting requests for transporting goods over long distances as far as 200–250 km. However, the pick-up was unsuitable for this work, and Sanjay was ready for the next bold step.

In 2007, Sanjay decided to buy Mahindra's Bolero, worth nearly 4.5 lakh rupees, for long distance assignments. Again by investing some of his savings and taking a loan, he purchased the Bolero tagged MH-21 D 8729. This time he hired a driver. After owning this vehicle he received many assignments. He became popular for providing accident-free and time-bound service.

What followed next was quite predictable. Companies are always on the lookout for reliable services. Sanjay had developed good relations with 25–30 companies. The Bolero was a small commercial vehicle fit for light loads. Therefore, there was the question of transporting larger payloads for which Sanjay was receiving many inquiries. Clients insisted him to provide conveyance services for heavy loads regardless of who owned the truck. This added to Sanjay's responsibilities. Sanjay thought that it would be profitable to undertake the extra work instead of assigning it to others.

Sanjay's thinking was always followed by action. In 2010, nearly three years after he owned the Bolero, Sanjay appraised the situation, discussed with his brother, and placed the order for the Tata 1109 LPT. With a loan of 7,10,000 rupees from AU Finance and a personal investment of 2,40,000 rupees, he bought the truck tagged MH-21 X 665.

Sanjay now provides his services all over the state. He interacts with transport companies based at Pune, Mumbai, Nagar, and many other cities. Usually, only the destination fee is claimed from a company after its goods are delivered. To recover profits it was equally necessary to charge the return fee. Sanjay was able to take on such

‘return’ jobs by means of the transport companies. Sanjay actively engaged the new truck in his business.

There is an increasing demand among industries for good transport services. Sanjay is receiving inquiries from large-scale manufacturers for bigger trucks to transport heavier loads. He has got great confidence from his many years of experience. He will probably buy a multi-axle truck by next year. He is quite ambitious and dreams to make it big in the transport industry.

A nearly 35-year-old Sanjay is the owner of four transport vehicles, and he will soon add a multi-axle truck to his collection. Judging by the growing demand for his reliable services, his business is going to expand rapidly, and one day he will have a fleet of transport vehicles. There is no doubt that in the next ten years he will be an eminent figure in the transport industry.

Sanjay stays in the MHADA Colony near TV Centre along with his parents, wife, and children. His son Sumit attends St. Mary’s High School. He is in class 1. It was Sanjay’s decision to educate him in an English-medium school. Although he was not able to complete his studies, he intends to provide good education for his son.

Sanjay was very frustrated in the first four months after he purchased the goods carrier. He almost wished to give up and get a job, yet he kept on trying. He worked hard and became extremely successful. He says, ‘One reaps the fruits of hard work.’ Today, he works even harder and one day he is definitely going to reap its rich rewards.

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Sanjay Kedar

MHADA Colony, TV Centre, Siraswadi Road, Jalna



Travelling by

Delhi's Metro Rail is very pleasant and comfortable. The metro rail is mostly underground and partly aboveground, and all its coaches are air-conditioned. The cooling comfort provided by the air-conditioning system is a boon, especially during the scorching summer. The complete copper pipe (copper tubular part) systems inside the air-conditioners were manufactured in Jalna. Yes, that's true! These copper tubes have been developed and manufactured in Jalna's Apro-corp Company situated in Additional MIDC area.

Jeetendra grew up in a family with a business background. The family consisted of nearly fifty members. Jeetendra's father, Shri Bachraj Rathi, was a Civil Engineer by profession. He was the only well-educated member of his generation in the family. Bachraj Rathi hailed from Jalna, but his government service saw him transferred to Vasmat, Hatta, Tirthpuri, Nanded and

'Paper' to 'Copper'

Jeetendra Rathi

After becoming an engineering graduate, Jeetendra Rathi was grappling with unemployment for a long time, yet it did not dampen his entrepreneurial and gutsy spirit. He took the first steps in realizing his dreams by starting a packaging business. He later established himself as a highly successful industrialist after he took a quantum leap into manufacturing of copper tubular components. His story serves to inspire all those who dare to take risks.



many other places. Jeetendra's birth, childhood, and education too were a part of this nomadic experience. In 1989, when at Nanded, Jeetendra passed his class 12 exams with a respectable score. He decided to pursue engineering studies. He had to make a choice between Mechanical engineering and Electronic engineering. Electronic engineering had more takers, yet Jeetendra decided to go against the grain and opted for Mechanical engineering. He gained admission for the same to Government College of Engineering, Aurangabad. While he was attending college, he often pondered his future. He decided against working in the family-owned Kirana store business. He believed that a 9-to-5 white-collar job would guarantee a happy and secure future for him. He earned his engineering degree in 1993. Fate seemed to shine upon him when he found himself to be one among the two candidates shortlisted for a job vacancy at Wipro Lighting in a campus interview, but his happiness was short-lived when his name was dropped in favour of the other candidate. His dream of a white-collar job now seemed distant. He was discontented, but nothing could be done. During his college years, he received the steadfast guidance of Bapu Apte, a personal manager of a company. This guidance proved invaluable in giving Jeetendra the required direction in life. After losing an opportunity to work at Wipro, he got a job at Fores Company in Paithan where he worked for eighteen months. He was not too happy to earn a monthly salary of 2500 rupees. He quit his job and went to Pune.

Meanwhile, he also pursued Master's degree in Management Studies thinking that two degrees would brighten his chances of landing a good job. After he completed his MMS program, he got engaged. He quit his job soon after he got married. Aware of the additional responsibilities his marriage had brought, he started searching for another job. He followed his father's advice to start an air-cooler business in Jalna. The air-cooler business was a seasonal business which experienced substantial idle time during slack periods. This prompted an impulsive Jeetendra to close down his air-cooler business in just four months.

After turning his back to the air-cooler business, Jeetendra started mulling over the idea of starting a packaging business. He visited a packaging exhibition in Mumbai where he learnt that cor-

rugated boxes were in high demand in the Indian market. He thought that there was immense scope for the packaging business in Marathwada. Moreover, the innovative packaging materials developed by other countries were far too expensive to be introduced to the Indian market. This led him to believe that if he could offer an affordable packaging solution such as a paper-based corrugated box, he could capture the Indian packaging market. Thus, he finalised his plans to set up a packaging business.

He approached several companies to see if they were interested to buy his packaging materials. No matter which company he visited, the reply he got from the company's officials was that he should first start off and only then they could decide. Nobody guaranteed him that they would buy his product. He was in a quandary – should he start a packaging business or shouldn't he? He eventually made the impulsive decision to set up his packaging company. In this endeavour, Jeetendra received help from his uncle, Shri Ramesh Totla. Jeetendra put a capital of nearly 20 lakh rupees in his venture. He bought a piece of land in MIDC area where he set up his production unit. He intended to purchase the best machines available in India, but he was left only 1.5 lakh rupees. He took out a loan from MSFC to pay for the machinery. Thus, Jeetendra launched his company, Yash Industries.

Jeetendra was against hiring experienced workers. He learned to operate the machines by working for some days in his acquaintance's unit in Jalgaon. He then used his experience to train the novices he hired to work in his unit. After three months, his staff was skilled enough to work. Jeetendra created a list of companies in Jalna. He pitched his products to these companies. He got orders from two companies. Thereafter, he went to Aurangabad. He told his college friends about his new business. Some of his friends were working as executives in different companies. One of his friends who worked in Videocon Company helped him bag an order worth 25,000 rupees from Videocon. He started getting orders from other companies too. Over the next three months, he got orders worth 1 crore rupees from Videocon. He supplied boxes to pharmaceuticals companies, seed industries, appliance manufacturers, textile manufacturers, and many other industries. After Jalna and Aurangabad, his products

made their way into Pune's market. The company's initial turnover was 25 lakh rupees. It has now become 4 crore rupees!

Notwithstanding the direct competition faced from entrants in the packaging business, Yash enjoyed the loyalty of its customers. However, Yash's production capacity could only meet small and medium orders. Jeetendra could not help but turn down large orders placed by even the most insistent customers. This continued until the time Videocon demanded a monthly supply of 60,000 boxes. Jeetendra explained that Yash could only produce 45,000 units each month, but Videocon refused to compromise on its order.

This was a turning point in Jeetendra's life. Jeetendra felt more confident in his products and in his ability as a manager. He once arrived at Videocon to discuss business. The company's officials were discussing the problems faced in importing copper components used in the company's brand of ACs. They were so annoyed that they were ready to delete the supplier's number from their cell phones if they had an alternative solution. Jeetendra was listening intently to their discussion. Unable to resist his gutsy and impulsive nature, he said to them, 'Can I get the opportunity?'

Although Jeetendra was a mechanical engineer, he had not the faintest idea about the copper business. However, the confidence he had gained from managing the packaging business prompted him to explore new business avenues. He requested Videocon's officials to give him six months to be able to supply them the copper components they required. He purchased a 1-acre plot of land in Additional MIDC area to build a production unit on. He sent copies of the land documents to Videocon as proof of his commitment. He needed to buy the required machinery from a foreign country. He required a capital of 10 crore rupees. Initially, he invested three crore rupees in the business. To raise the remaining amount, he applied to SIDBI for a loan which he eventually obtained. Thoroughly impressed by SIDBI's customer service, he says, 'I was wondering whether I was offering them a loan.' Over the next two months, he kept communicating with some Chinese suppliers and booked six machines. Asserting that he meant business, he sent copies of the booking documents to Videocon.

All necessary tests were conducted before 'Aprocorp' became

ready for actual production in 2008. Videocon placed its orders with Aprocorp. Aprocorp was gradually developing. Aware that a business cannot rely on a single client, Jeetendra reached out to other prospective customers. He started getting orders from Mumbai and Delhi. Aprocorp's business was hit when Videocon abruptly cancelled its order with Aprocorp and again started importing the copper components. This came as a great shock to Jeetendra, but he soon regained his balance. He started participating in several national and international exhibitions. His logic behind this was simple. 'Exhibitions provide a platform to meet officials of big companies, which is otherwise difficult. High-ranking company officials such as presidents, vice-presidents, and managing directors attend these exhibitions, and they approach you. You have the opportunity to impress them with your products and services.' Jeetendra had such an experience at an exhibition in Delhi. German company, Bombardier, one of the world's largest companies in the rail equipment manufacturing and servicing industry, received the contract by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Ltd to supply metro cars. The company manufactured the metro cars in Hosur, Tamilnadu, and it imported the copper tubular part required in ACs. In the exhibition, after Bombardier's officials learnt that Aprocorp was manufacturing such components, they made an open offer to Jeetendra. They said, 'If you are interested to do business with us meet us in Hosur. If not, then don't waste your as well as our time.' Jeetendra was impressed



with their straightforward attitude, but it also made him worry. That very moment he took the decision to go to Hosur.

After Jeetendra reached the company's office in Hosur, he was greeted by 10-12 senior officials seated in the conference hall. Jeetendra was on his own. The first question fired at Jeetendra was, 'What is your confidence level?' At first Jeetendra did not understand the question. After some time he replied, 'Good'. He was told to take a tour of the factory. The tour lasted for half an hour and was soon followed by a meeting. One of the officials asked him, 'Now, tell us, what is your confidence level?' Jeetendra was stumped. He was awed by the technology and the extensive nature of work at Bombardier. He replied, 'Honestly, it is less than it was before, but I will definitely be able to work for you.' Jeetendra's choice to take up the challenge proved to be a decisive moment in his life.

Bombardier wanted Aprocorp to supply 62 different parts. Aprocorp developed the samples as per Bombardier's requirements. Of these, Bombardier immediately approved 59 samples. Minor errors were detected in three samples. These were found to be caused by design fault and were corrected at once. Bombardier's principle of collaboration was loud and clear – 'If you wish to supply us, then first attain our level.' It was necessary for Aprocorp to upgrade. Jeetendra imported new CNC machines required for this undertaking. To help Aprocorp develop the new products, Bombardier's technicians and engineers stayed at Jalna for several days. The efforts of Aprocorp's team and Bombardier's engineers proved to be extremely valuable. The company is manufacturing 250 metro cars this year and 1000 metro cars next year. Who is going to be their supplier of copper tubular parts? You guessed it – Aprocorp!

The force behind Jeetendra's success is his team of industrious and committed colleagues. In their presence, Jeetendra hardly has to look after the day-to-day affairs of his two units, thus allowing him to concentrate solely on business expansion. Atul Joshi who is responsible for the corrugated box unit single-handedly manages the purchase of raw materials, processing, production, and delivery of the packaging materials. The production of copper tubular parts is managed by a team of ten engineers under the headship of A. A. Maniyar and Dasharath Phad. They have told Jeetendra to get the

work and leave it to them to execute it in the best possible manner. They both were Jeetendra's engineering classmates! The team's motto is: 'We develop any kind of tubular component in 48 hours.' Previously, this work required a month to be completed. Aprocorp's engineers have nearly 1500 different tools at their disposal! The support Jeetendra has received from his younger brother, Purshotam, has proven to be most valuable. They discuss matters with each other before taking any important decision.

Their next goal is to handle the complete assembly of separate components. They believe delivering assembled units instead of separate parts to their clients will help improve their product's quality and increase the scope of their work. They have already started working towards it. They plan to implement this project in 2013. The person they consider to be their role model is Shri Ramkishanji Mundadda of Mahendra Seeds Company. Although they converse very rarely with him, they regard him as their role model for his sense of timing.

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Jeetendra Rath

Aprocorp Engineers Pvt. Ltd., Plot No.-7, MIDC Phase 2, Jalna



Computer's Doctor

Manish Rath

Computers have become an integral part of our lives, but these powerful machines are also vulnerable to a host of problems. When a computer breaks down, one starts to look for good technical support. The first name that comes to mind is Manish Rath, founder of Jalna's famous computer store Laptop Clinic. The following is the story of a man who is gradually taking the state by storm by using his after-sales service strategy.

'If I have to choose between sales and service, I will select service. Selling computers is no big deal, but the real challenge is providing good technical support. Any electrical item breaks down sooner or later and requires service. The person who develops the most reliable service system is a sure winner,' says Manish Rath. He gets straight to the point while sharing his experience. Shri Manish Rath has been working in the computer business since 1996. Today, more than fifty technicians work under him to provide comprehensive

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computer-based solutions to customers.

His business plans took shape recently in the form of a computer store, Laptop Clinic. He wants to expand his business across Maharashtra by 2013.

Manish was born on 31 March 1973. He was tech-savvy since childhood. He matriculated in 1988 and passed his class 12 exams in 1990. He obtained his Bachelor's de-



gree in Science in 1993. When he was in class 8, he helped his elder brother Satish to run his medical store. Computers made their way into Indian markets in 1985. They were named as 286, 386 back then; it was a generation of DOS-based computers. Manish immediately fell in love with computers. Bhageerath Agencies in Jalna purchased a computer. After noticing Manish's fascination with computers, 'Bhageerath' gave away its first order for a new computer to Manish. A computer would then cost nearly 1.5 lakh rupees! For Manish, who was hardly 20 years old, it was one of the happiest moments of his life. It was also the turning point in his life.

Satish entrusted the store to Manish, who was more interested in making a career in the field of computers. In 1995, Manish handed over the store's responsibility to his cousin brother and entered the computer business. A computer institute, Tantra Software, located on the top floor of Khardekar complex (opposite to Mission Hospital), had then closed down. Manish bought the room along with its furniture and started his business in 1996. Computers were new to the small city of Jalna; his business was in its trial stage. However, even before Manish could make any progress, an unexpected domestic crisis was compelling him to shut down his business and take up a job. It was at this critical juncture that Shri Suresh-seth Mantri of Bhageerath, Shri Sushil Karva, and Shri Sunil Raithata came to his aid. Thus, he gave up the idea of closing down the business; he could still pursue his dreams. Everyone supported him because he had provided excellent service for three years to his customers. After his family—mother, father, wife Smt. Radhika, and relatives—overcame the crisis boldly, he opened a training institute and offered courses in computer hardware and language. After 1997, he provided training only in hardware.

Manish experienced the thrill of carving out his own career, especially because it was aligned with his interests. The most remarkable period of Manish's journey was between 1988 to 1998. This was the period when he handled computers, repaired them, assembled and sold them, and provided hardware training. He acquired the Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) of many companies. He was among the privileged few who were permitted to handle and work on this once expensive machine. Many, including Shri Suresh-seth Mantri

and Shri Sunil Raithatha, trusted Manish and his abilities. Manish gained an in-depth knowledge of computers by reading many computer-related articles and books. He kept himself up-to-date with global trends and technological developments in the field of computers. This helped him to develop his business and gave him the edge over his competitors. He soon became popular for providing effective computer solutions in Jalna.

Manish knew that the growing craze for computers would lead to an increase in its demand, yet he focussed more on providing good service. The people of Jalna were never really accustomed to paying service charges, but Manish gradually introduced this concept. 'Selling computers does not require special skills, but to survive and thrive in a market full of competitors after-sales service is going to be the decisive factor.' His assessment stood the test of time. In 2002, after his business grew considerably, he was joined by his older brother, Satish. Satish used his business expertise to manage the purchase department while Manish concentrated on enhancing services.

When laptops began hitting the market, many companies were still focussing on selling computers and laptops. There was always a shortage of service providers for laptops. The only service available for laptops was the replacement of their faulty parts. Knowing perfectly well that laptops would soon become popular, Manish decided to learn how to repair laptops. Other business developments were also under way. Manish started hiring new people. He became a leading name in the computer industry of Jalna. He shared his computer knowledge freely with all his employees; even the possibility that his employees could one day become his competitors never made him uneasy. Manish says, 'Generally, in this field, no one shares key points with their employees, but I do.' Some of his previous employees are now employed with Microsoft in Bangalore, Varanasi and elsewhere. He mentions that except for one person from Krishidhan Company's IT-hardware department, he has trained all of his employees. His actions prove that knowledge does increase by sharing.

He kept his feet firmly on the ground and never became complacent, though he made great progress. He continued learning

new skills and keeping track of the latest developments in the field of computers. Even after his three engineers left the company, he provided service to his customers without any difficulty and inhibition. 'It is acceptable if the sales suffer, but people must always get proper service' has become the motto of his business.

With an eye on the future, Manish focused on the subject of laptop-repairs; after 2007, he started taking special efforts in that direction. He stepped up his efforts in 2010. On 10 October 2010, he started Laptop Clinic, a fully-equipped showroom in Jalna. This is probably a one-of-its-kind showroom in Marathwada, which offers a wide range of products, including nearly forty different laptops. The showroom boasts of various PCs, hardware, and computer-related components and gadgets. Customers from faraway places, including Aurangabad visit Laptop Clinic to make a purchase.

He has also set up another outlet in Old Jalna on 6 March 2011. On 13 March 2011, on the Aurangabad-Jalna Road, opposite a milk dairy, he has opened a huge showroom. Within the next six months, he will be starting branches in Nanded, Solapur, and Nagar. He is planning to operate franchises all across Maharashtra by the end of this year.

He has called his nephew Sagar Kabra from London to help him achieve his goals. Sagar has been successfully running a computer store with four outlets in London for the past six years. His expertise will definitely be helpful to Manish in expanding the business. With his 10–15 year old, experienced workforce, and enthusiastic new recruits, Manish is making great progress to realise his goals. How-



ever, he sticks to one rule. He says, 'I have disliked cheating right from childhood. One can make extra money by deceiving customers but not for long. Such a person may be able to make a quick buck but gets out quickly...'

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Z-Security: A new concept

Manish has introduced a completely different concept. He is setting up a separate gallery to provide security and surveillance solutions under the name Z-Security in Jalna and Aurangabad. The aspect of security for home and business is going to be of utmost importance. Door-phone, camera, camera-recording, wired and wireless cameras, alarm system, shutter - door sensor, motion sensor, and panic alarm systems will be put on display in the gallery. It will also have a live demo facility to explain how to operate these devices. In the coming future, these systems will prove important for homes, shops, warehouses, banks, supermarkets, and showrooms. This is definitely a unique gallery in all of Maharashtra with a live-demo facility and the credit goes to Shri Manish Rathi of Jalna...!

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Manish Rathi

Laptop Clinic, Opposite Mission Hospital, New Jalna, Jalna



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The Chordia family endured great hardships about twenty-five years ago. Nemichand Chordia stayed at the Ganesh Bhavan Cowshed in Jalna's Nalgalli area with his wife, daughter, and brother. The gentlemen of the family worked in a cloth shop, but what they earned was barely enough to make ends meet. Nemichand's wife and daughter also sweated for a pittance by rolling papads, filling packets of salt, and grinding chillies. Nothing in their lives changed for many years. Offended by certain incidents at the cloth shop, the gentlemen quit their jobs and worked at a relative's juice centre, where the conditions were no different. Embittered by

The Taste of Jalna

**Nemichand Chordia /
Basanti Chordia – Une**

The quote of the famous philosopher Bertrand Russell, 'Extreme hopes are born from extreme misery' applies to the inspiring story of a daring and gritty, 64-year-old father and his daughter. They joined forces to climb out of poverty and started Jain Bandhu Pav-Bhaji at Karva Nagar, Jalna. They have created a memorable taste of pav-bhaji that has left their loyal patrons from Jalna and elsewhere longing for more. The story reveals their magical recipe for success.



the meagre wages and the lack of respect, they quit the juice centre to start their own business. In 1988, they bought a food cart to sell pav-bhaji, but their business suffered a major setback after the cook whom they appointed ran away with the advance payment. A year later, a 64-year-old and determined Nemichand again attempted to start the pav-bhaji business. The year was 1989. In fact, the entire family girded up their loins to start the pav-bhaji business. Thus, their food cart hit the pavement near Jalna's Shivaji Putla area with a couple of tables and chairs borrowed from acquaintances. A hired cook prepared the pav-bhaji while Nemichand and his daughter served the customers, and his wife washed the utensils. Many months went by. The family's efforts paid off; the food cart was replaced with a spacious hall, which they named as Jain Bandhu Pav-Bhaji & Juice Centre.

The rags-to-riches story of Nemichand and his daughter exemplifies that determination can move mountains. A 64-year-old Nemichand Chordia proved that age is not a barrier to achieving success. Owing to his self-respecting nature, he could not stand being unfairly treated by his employer and relatives. Therefore, he decided to take control of his own life. His family stood by him and together they showed their mettle.

In 1990, after they started the food cart, they continued to stay in the Ganesh Bhavan Cowshed. Later, they moved to a rented accommodation next to Ganesh Bhavan as it was convenient from the business point of view. Their efforts bore fruit; seven years later, in 1997, they purchased a flat in Prem-Ganga Plaza. In 1998, they purchased a plot in Karva Nagar area where they shifted to on 14 June 2000. However, all this wasn't easy.

Although Nemichandji had hired a cook, he made the pav-bhaji masala all by himself. He bought the required ingredients, measured them according to his recipe, and made the masala. His customers savoured the unique taste of his pav-bhaji. It didn't take long for Nemichand's pav-bhaji to become popular in Jalna. There was a significant improvement in the family's living conditions. Basanti was a bright student. She took her studies seriously. She majored in Science at college; she passed her class 12 exams in 1995. When she got admitted to a college in Aurangabad to pursue DHMS, she was

much talked about in their community. Everyone praised her. She even got accommodation to a student hostel. After some days, Basanti began to feel restless. She missed her parents. She was worried about them. After much consideration, she decided to quit college and return to Jalna. Her homecoming became the subject of debate among the relatives. Basanti had only one thing to say – ‘Relatives will discuss and have their own opinions, but nobody will come forward to help. I have come to help you. I will stay here and help you to develop the business. DHMS is not the only available option. I will pursue a degree in Commerce from a college in Jalna.’ She proved that daughters are no less than sons. Apart from helping her father, she also studied hard to obtain an M. Com. degree. This proved to be the turning point for the Chordias.

Basanti eased the burden of her father by taking care of the business. A significant development in Basanti’s life was in the offing. Harish Une, the owner of an ice-cream parlour in Aurangabad, often frequented Jalna to market his products. During one of his visits, he got acquainted to Basanti. Gradually, they fell in love with each other. Back then, societies were not in favour of women working independently in business. Basanti often felt lonely. However, after Harish entered her life, she felt comforted. Harish was quite helpful. He provided tips to develop the business and kept track of its progress. News of the budding relationship between Harish and Basanti soon spread among friends and relatives. Harish came from a financially stable family. He owned a house, a shop, and an ice-cream parlour in Aurangabad. Basanti turned down his proposal because she did not want to part with her parents and business after marriage. Harish was considerate towards Basanti’s feelings. He knew that her father was quite old. Moreover, the workload was also increasing. Basanti had no siblings and was the sole caretaker of her family. Finally, a bighearted Harish took the decision to settle in Jalna. His family also took into account Basanti’s situation and gave their approval for their marriage.

In 1994, Basanti took over the reins of the business. In 1995, after Harish joined forces with the Chordias, the business developed rapidly. In 1997, they purchased a flat in Prem-Ganga Plaza. They were not yet financially strong. However, some heaven-sent people

offer support even when the whole world has turned its back on you. The person who came to their rescue was Shri Ram Karva, the owner of Prem-Ganga Plaza! The flat was quite expensive; the Chordias could not afford even to make an advance payment. Shri Karva trusted the family; the Chordias too proved themselves worthy of his trust. Shri Karva gave the flat to Nemichandji without taking any advance payment or deliberating on the matter. The family had to make a fixed payment to Shri Karva on Tuesdays. Accordingly, the family paid off the complete amount in three years.

The Chordias' pay-bhaji business was booming. The family shifted to their new flat. Their next business strategy was to own a shop. They hoped to buy the favourably-located roadside plot on the very corner of Karva Nagar. Coincidentally, the plot belonged to Shri Ram Karva, and it was up for sale. When the Chordias came to know of this, they immediately contacted Shri Karva. However, the problem was they only had 20% of the required amount. Moreover, Shri Karva was not in a position to make any compromises because it was a family-owned plot. The bond would be issued only after receiving half the amount as down payment. The purchased bond was valid only for six months. The six-month term almost came to an end, yet the family was not able to raise the required amount. Basanti says, "We did not have bhishi (chit-fund) with a big group, and nobody invited us to programmes or functions. We were petty tapriwalas (tea seller, who owns a makeshift stall) to the society. Why do tapriwalas need money? – "was their question. In times of need, we used to borrow money on a loan basis. Even after recovering the loan with interest, they would sing mocking couplets like "Tapriwale...!" However, fortune favours the brave. The timely intervention of Shri Vijay-bhaiyya Karva and Shri Omprakash Aggrawal helped to solve the money problem of the Chordias. The family acquired the new plot. Initially, they built a shed from metal sheets on the plot. On 14 June 2000, the Chordias shifted their business operations to the shed on the plot.

New developments in Basanti's life were also under way. In July 2000, Basanti Chordia married Harish Une. Harish began paying more attention to develop the business. The plot was open in all directions. A boundary wall was first built around the plot. The eatery

was refurbished and furnished with brand new chairs and tables. The Chordias spent most of their time serving customers, so they decided to save travelling time by staying in the eatery. They spent the first 4–5 years in repaying the loan.

Basanti felt quite lonesome before Harish Une entered her life. Now, her friend circle was increasing. Basanti says, ‘There is a significant difference between women’s groups and men’s groups. Even if women are quite friendly with each other, they are not able to lend 5000–50,000 rupees in times of need. However, men manage to lend and borrow money with ease.’ In the course of these discussions, she also spoke about the problems she had to face as a woman. Basanti has shown great courage by setting up the business in a time when society disapproved of women getting out of their homes.

While the loan’s instalments were due, the family decided to build a kitchen facility. It was difficult to prepare pav-bhaji in the open, especially in the monsoons. They obtained loans from SBI and Chikli Urban Bank to build their kitchen. After the workload increased, they decided to build a house on the plot. By then, they had almost repaid their previous loan. When they needed a loan to build their house above the kitchen floor, Shri Paresb Raithata promptly came to their aid and acted as a guarantor. After the construction was completed the family moved to its new address. Even while the construction work was in progress, the Chordias never closed their business!

Many changes have occurred in past five years. In addition to pav-bhaji and juice, the Chordias have introduced Chinese cuisine, cold-drinks, and ice-creams to their menu. They have always paid special attention towards maintaining a clean and hygienic environment. In the opening hours, the kitchen, counter, and the service area are attended by at least one member of the family. Nemichandji, now an octogenarian, still makes the pav-bhaji masala and manages the counter during peak hours. Basanti oversees the kitchen, whereas Harish manages the serving area, and the juice and ice-cream orders.

Jain Bandhu’s pav-bhaji has become the signature food item of Jalna. Many locals and people from outside Jalna relish this pav-bhaji. Even those who are reluctant to eat outside food, savour the

Jain Bandhu's pav-bhaji owing to the good hygiene and quality standards maintained by the Chordias. Basanti says, 'We started this business simply for our subsistence. It is by the grace of God and the invaluable support of many well-wishers that we have been able to come so far.'

Poonamchandji is Nemichandji's younger brother. They have been staying together since the beginning. Poonamchandji extends his full co-operation to Nemichandji in every single undertaking. In the year 2000, after they acquired the new plot and started the pav-bhaji centre, only one name came to their minds – Jain Bandhu Pav-bhaji – a fitting name for the strong bond between the two brothers.

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Basanti Chordia – Une

Jain Bandhu Pav-Bhaji, Karva Nagar Corner, Jalna



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In the city of Jalna, the brothers, Rameshwar and Gyaneshwar Sandupatla, own a store by the name of Gayatri Petticoat in Akshadeep Arcade near Terapanthi Bhavan. They have many brands of hosiery products in their well-stocked store. In fact, they have acquired distributorship from many companies for the city of Jalna. Besides other goods, dozens of neatly-folded petticoats lay in piles in the shelves of the store. These uniquely frilled petticoats have a story to tell. It is a story of the brothers who clambered out of poverty and achieved success, and empowered as many as 62 women to become self-supporting.

Narayanrao Sandupatla, their father, is from Manvat. He came to Jalna at the age of 45 to find a job. He struggled to make ends meet by working in a clothes store.

Shri Sandupatla and his wife, Smt Savitribai, were childless for nearly 12 years before Dyaneshwar was born to them in 1971. Two years later, in 1972, Rameshwar was born to the couple. Narayanrao now

‘Tailor-made’ Lives

Rameshwar / Dyaneshwar
Sandupatla

The Sandupatla brothers struggled to make a living. Although they were studiously challenged and came from a non-business background, their business acumen and steadfastness paved the way for their success. Their brand of petticoats has made way into the distant markets of Mumbai and Solapur.



had many mouths to feed, and his family could hardly live off his paltry earnings. Savitribai stood shoulder to shoulder with him by working at home as a bidi worker for ‘Majoor Chhap Bidi’. The brothers attended the Shri Mahavir Sthanakvasi Jain School. Ever since they were in the fourth grade, they started performing odd jobs during their summer holidays.

Dyaneshwar successfully completed secondary school, and Rameshwar completed higher secondary education. Their struggle to fend for themselves and their parents left them with little time to study, and therefore, they gave up pursuing further studies. After his matriculation, Dyaneshwar helped his friend to set up a cutlery shop. His friend invested the capital to set up the shop. At his insistence, Dyaneshwar started working in the shop, but what he earned in return for his services was not much. To make some extra money, he did pygmy collection work as a sideline. He carried out the collection work on his way home during lunchtime and in the evenings after working at the shop. In 1996, his friend’s brother started to oversee the business. He disapproved of Dyaneshwar’s sideline. He once warned Dyaneshwar and asked him to choose between his job and sideline. Dyaneshwar immediately quit the job and resolved never to work for anyone in the future. He opened a kirana shop nearby his house in Balaji Nagar and made a daily profit of 100–150 rupees. His pygmy collection work fetched him 100 rupees each day. He was happy to earn thrice of what he earned before.

Rameshwar worked as an accountant in a clothes store. He felt that there was a good demand for petticoats. He came up with an idea. For trial purpose, he purchased a 100-metre fabric for 1750 rupees from the very shop he worked in and stitched 50 petticoats from it. He showed his petticoats to his brother-in-law, Shri Paraji Chitral, who owned a clothes shop in Ambad. Shri Chitral bought all the petticoats from him except for two petticoats, which Rameshwar kept with himself as samples. Thus, on 26 August 1998, Rameshwar made his first profit in the petticoat business of 100 rupees. Shri Chitral helped him to get advance orders amounting to nearly 250 petticoats from various clothes shops in Ambad. An overjoyed Rameshwar returned home and shared his business experience with his brother. Dyaneshwar liked his brother’s business plan. Although

Rameshwar had bagged orders for 250 petticoats, he hardly had the money to buy the required fabric. He headed straight to the shop to meet his boss. He told his boss everything about his newfound venture and requested him to give 500 metres of fabric on credit. His boss tried to dissuade him from continuing the petticoat business. He told Dyaneshwar that he did not mind giving him fabric on credit, but the petticoat business was trivial and short-lived. However, Rameshwar stood by his plan and bought 500 m of fabric on credit from his boss. After creating 250 petticoats from it, he left for Ambad. This time he took Dyaneshwar with him. They delivered the petticoats to retailers and collected the money from them. Although many retailers expressed dissatisfaction over the petticoats, they placed double their previous order on the condition that they improve the quality of the petticoats. Rameshwar used his earnings to pay the outstanding debt to his boss. He again bought 1000 metres of fabric on credit from him. Over the next week, he made 500 petticoats. This time his petticoats were of good quality. Rameshwar's business gained ground and his petticoats started to reach the distant markets of Jintur, Selu, and Mantha.

Previously, Rameshwar used to cut the fabric and outsource the stitching work to some women in his neighbourhood. In light of the increased workload, they required a dedicated workforce. During their search for poor and needy women who could stitch petticoats, they came to know that women from the Muslim community were good tailors. These women are capable of delivering quality work, are reliable, and punctual. They started assigning jobs to such women. Sometimes they also assigned them the cutting work and gave them extra payment. As the market demand for their petticoats increased, they employed more people for managing the cutting work. Their business was in full swing. Both brothers were working fulltime in the petticoat business. They bought a new 400 sq. ft. shop after their 120 sq. ft. shop proved too small.

Best quality and reliability became their selling points for doing good business. Gradually, 'Gayatri' petticoats gained popularity over local brands in the distant markets of Solapur and Ulhasnagar. When they were unable to meet the rising demand, they decided to buy a cutting machine. The machine could cut 300 units in an hour.

They also increased the number of garment workers. Presently, 62 women are working for Gayatri and a majority of them are Muslim women. They share a bond of trustworthiness with the brothers. Although these women rarely step out of their homes, they have no reservations working with Rameshwar and Dyaneshwar. They treat Rameshwar and Dyaneshwar like their real brothers and speak openly with them. Two years ago, Ramehswar remained bedridden for nearly one and half years. At that time, these women asked for ‘Mannat’ in all the mosques they visited from Jalna to Ajmer. Rameshwar believes he recovered from his prolonged illness because of his ‘sisters’ who prayed for his good health and is forever grateful to them.

Dyaneshwar and Ramehswar are doing the hosiery business together. The bonds between the members of the Sandupatla household are so strong that the children call each other’s fathers ‘Papa’. The oneness of the women of the house has rubbed off on the children who enthusiastically visit each other’s grandparents. The secret of the Sandupatlas’ success lies in their unity that extends from the household to their business. Rameshwar is engaged in the welfare of Gayatri’s employees. The brothers seek to bring about positive social change by texting inspirational thoughts to others each day under the name of ‘Vichardhara’.

Both the brothers never fared well in their school exams, but they passed the test of life with flying colours. That education is a supplement and not the means to achieve success seems true in their case. We prospered owing to our father’s constant encouragement and our good intentions. Thus, the brothers disclose their formula for success – ‘Courage, hard work, and good intentions’.

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Rameshwar Sandupatla

Gayatri Petticoat, Near Alankar Talkies, Jalna



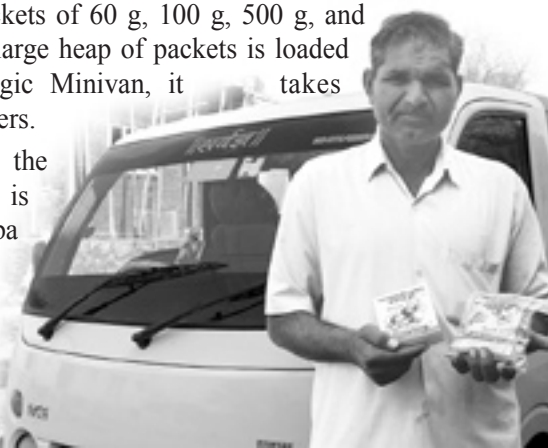
After crossing Badnapur on the route from Aurangabad to Jalna is Dhopteshwar Fork. Further ahead after taking a left from Naigaon Fork and crossing the Purna River is the small village of Dongargaon. While moving alongside a stream in the village, the nose begins to get the whiff of something frying. The aroma leads to a simple house with several bunches of bananas piled at its entrance. The place is bustling with human activity. A group of women is busy peeling the bananas, slicing them directly over a big wok, and flavouring the deep-fried chips with peppercorn

and chilli powders. The ready chips are weighed with an electronic scale to create packets of 60 g, 100 g, 500 g, and 1000 g. After the large heap of packets is loaded into the Tata Magic Minivan, it takes off to fulfil the orders.

The owner of the production unit is Ishwardas Dhondiba Ghangaon. He wears a white bush-shirt and pyjama, a basil mala around his neck, and a

Ishwardas Ghangaon

Ishwardas Ghangaon, a simple rustic of Dongargaon, at first sight may fail to impress you, but after eating his Gokul brand of banana chips you will start singing his praises. This hidden talent from a small village was discovered through the medium of Krishi Vidyapeeth. His story tells that the way to success is through the customer's stomach.



tilak on his forehead. Born on 12 March 1967, he is today 45 years old. He was inclined towards business at a young age. He somehow coped with his schooling up to class 8. The family-owned dryland farm was hardly a source of income because of the lack of water and proper irrigation facilities. Ishwardas once tried propagating plants for a nursery but failed owing to water scarcity. In December 1998, while searching for some means to supplement his agricultural income, he came across an advertisement published by Pune's Krishi Shikshan & Sanshodhan Parishad. It informed of thirty different training courses including specialization in fruit processing offered by Agricultural University, Parbhani. Ishwardas was interested in fruit processing. His previous trials in fruit processing failed owing to lack of guidance. He applied for the training course and was selected. He received a stipend during his three months of training, and thus, he discovered a new way to realize his ambitions.

After receiving training and direction from Dr P. N. Satvadhar of Krishi Vidyapeeth, Ishwardas decided to dive into the business of commercial production of chips. But, business is easier said than done. Every bank that Ishwardas approached with his project report rejected him a loan even though it was a small amount to buy new equipment. Finally, in July 1999, he used kitchen utensils to start small-scale production of chips.

The most important of all ingredients were the bananas. They had to be green and raw. The process involved buying fine bananas from Jalna's market, transporting them to Dongargaon, peeling and slicing them, frying the slices, spicing the chips, and finally weighing and packaging the chips. Ishwardas' wife Sumitrabai equally contributed her efforts to business development. She was in charge of the production process whereas Ishwardas took care of purchasing raw-material and marketing the product. About 10 kg of chips are prepared from half a quintal of bananas. The plant's peels and stems were used as fodder. Initially, he bought the bananas from the market. Later, when he came in contact with commercial cultivators, he directly purchased the bananas from them.

The real challenge was marketing and selling the chips. In comparison to the chips produced from local varieties of banana, the chips produced from the starchier Grand-Naine variety were crunch-

ier and had an appealing yellow colour. However, Ishwardas had to make do with the local variety of bananas as the Grand-Naine was mostly available in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The other downside was the packaging which was unattractive by urban standards. Moreover, the marketing representative was not



a dressed-to-impress, seasoned professional. He was Ishwardas Ghangaon, a simple dressed rustic of the Malkari community. Most shops that he approached refused to stock his products, but he did not lose hope. He remained resolute and repeatedly visited the shops. The market response to his products was great in areas where they were sold, yet there were other places where the business was not getting off the ground. In this regard, Ishwardas shares one of his experiences. He tells, 'On each of the four occasions I approached one of the shops my request met refusal. On my fifth visit, I was invited inside the shop and asked to take a seat. The shopkeeper after sampling the chips immediately agreed to stock the entire 1.5 kg of chips that I had with me. He placed another order within a week. Now every week the shop sells 60–70 kg of my chips.'

In the beginning, Ishwardas transported his sack of products on a bicycle. He later bought a motorcycle and delivered his products to distant towns and villages. Thereafter, he purchased the Tata Magic Minivan. Every year he now sells up to 120 quintals of chips. The otherwise full-scale production of chips slows down from March up to May on account of limited supply of bananas. Ishwardas' Gokul Chips have reached as far as Aurangabad, Beed, Nanded, and Parbhani.

Ishwardas intends to expand his business in the coming years. He has four women employees working at his production unit, while his six family members handle other related responsibilities. Ishwardas plans to invest in setting up a new production plant on his farm. To cut down on the manpower cost, he wishes to equip his new unit with machines to automate the production. He is arranging capital for his new undertaking. Ishwardas who was once turned down by many banks is today in a position to choose a bank for a loan! He will approach a bank that provides loan on favourable terms.

Ishwardas has participated in various food fairs where he advertised and sold his products from a stall. He has received many awards. Even the governor and ministers have praised him for his tasty products. He once introduced bitter-gourd chips to the market, but it has faced a setback following the difficulties in bitter-gourd production. He has started the production of Gooseberry (Amla) Candy and Chana Masala, which are selling well. He has greatly improved the packaging of his products to increase their market reach. He advances on the path to success with the support of his wife and his children, Gokul and Deepak. He has resolved to make Gokul a state-level brand in the next five years. Ishwardas has a small piece of advice for budding entrepreneurs: Work with perseverance. Never get exhausted and never give up. Success will be yours.

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Ishwardas Ghangaon

Gokul Chips, Dongargaon, Ta. Badnapur, Jalna District



The Gooseberry Woman

Sitabai Mohite

“After purchasing the gooseberries, first they are washed with saltwater and then dried. It is at this stage we decide what to prepare from them. The first machine shreds the berries. The vessels on its either sides collect the shreds, and the seeds are expelled. The shredded berries are squeezed with a cloth to get the liquid extract used to prepare juice and syrup. The shreds are dried and then used to prepare powder, supari, or ladoos. To prepare Amla candy first the berries are boiled and then chopped in the other machine. The seeds are removed, and the chopped berries are marinated in sugar-syrup for

While many praise the qualities of the Indian Gooseberry (Amla) as the most potent fruit beneficial to mankind, Sindhi-Kalegaon’s Sitabai chops, skins, boils, grates, and grounds them at her production unit. If it wasn’t for her, people would be deprived of the exhaustive items she prepares from this single fruit. Candy, sharbat, gulkand, pickle, supari, ladoo, and many other Amla derivatives are part of her line of products. Armed with only three English expressions— Thank You, Sorry, and Good Morning – this barely-literate woman has also made a successful tour abroad!



3–4 days. Afterwards, they are dried for 1–2 hours in the dryer, and the Amla candy is ready. The middle machine is for preparing Amla Mu-rambba. To operate the machine stand on it, place two ber-

ries on the frontal bar, and step on the pedal. Needles emerge from the machine and pierce the berries. A workman can pierce nearly two quintals of berries in a day. These custom-built machines were bought from Ichalkaranji. The perforated berries are partly cooked and marinated once in a sugar-syrup of one-thread consistency for 5–6 days and then in a sugar-syrup of two-thread consistency for 3–4 days. The syrup must be thick and without a trace of water so that the Murambba can last for 1–2 years,” explains Sitabai at her production unit. Sitabai has been honoured with several prestigious awards, including awards related to State Government Industries. She was also offered a foreign tour. A few years back she was introduced to alphabet recognition as part of the adult education program. However, after conversing with her, it is hard to believe that she is barely-literate.

Sitabai lived with her parent’s Natha Patil Waghmode and Dhru-padabai Waghmode, and brothers, Nanasheb and Kakasaheb, in Ambad Taluka’s Tad Hasgaon village. In 1991, at just 13 years of age, she was married to 16-year-old Rambhau Mohite of Ghodegaon village. Rambhau worked as an agricultural labourer in Ramnagar, near Ghodegaon. In 1997-98, he moved to Sindhi-Kalegaon along with Sitabai and started working in Kisanrao Kharat’s farm. Rambhau entered into a partnership for grape cultivation. Both Rambhau and Sitabai would toil in the farm. They cultivated grape vineyards and potherbs. They developed a nursery bed and sold the plants, but it was a seasonal business that worked for six months. The rest of the months they had to look for work or sell some home-made products. They lived near a roadside dhaba. Many years passed by. One day a girl excitedly came running into the house. She had a packet of amla candy in her hand. The candy was priced at 10 rupees. She informed that the candy seller was eating lunch at the dhaba. He was Shri Kadam a worker of Limbgaon’s Shetkari Sanghatana. By the time he finished his lunch, Sitabai approached him and invited him home. She offered him tea and straightforwardly inquired about the recipe for the amla candy. Kadam openly shared the recipe. He hinted that the recipe was easier said than done. All the berries would go to waste because of one little mistake.

Those were the times when Sitababai carried vegetables on her

head to sell them in Jalna's Shakuntala Nagar and other areas. On the next day of her discussion with Shri Kadam, Sitabai bought home 2 kg of gooseberries. She tried out the candy recipe explained by Kadam, but as per his warnings the candy got spoiled. Discontentedly, she contacted Shri Kadam. He laughed and then said, 'Come to Limbgaon for two days and observe the actual process.' Sitabai and Rambahau soon left for Limbgaon. They stayed at Limbgaon for two days and carefully observed the process of preparing amla candy.

Sitabai made a second attempt at the recipe. She bought 200 rupees worth of gooseberries and sugar. This time the candy turned out right. In 2003, an event was arranged by Jalna's Shetkari Sanghatana and Sharad Joshi was invited on the occasion. Laxman Mohite noticed the efforts of the struggling couple and granted them a free table. The duo took full advantage of the opportunity. They sold amla candy and amla juice. Customers also bought their dried farm yield and in five days the Mohites earned 1200 rupees. Minus the overheads, they had made a profit of 1000 rupees. They were ecstatic about it. They decided to invest the money in the business instead of using it for household expenses. Today, if Sitabai is asked about her investment in the business, she replies, '200 rupees!'

The couple did not get carried away with their initial success. They had more ambitious plans. They would carry their products on the bicycle and present themselves beforehand in different areas of Jalna at the first signs of a potential crowd. They did not even miss the opportunity to pitch their products to the crowds that would gather during grand weddings. In the afternoon hours, Sitabai moved around Jalna for door-to-door selling. Some women even disdained her, yet she remained calm and left after handing out her information leaflets to them. After some days, she would receive orders from these very women who would be impressed after reading about the high potency of the fruit. Sitabai made some conjectures based on her day-to-day observations. She did good business at offices from 1st to the 15th of each month. Most housewives had money after the 15th, and so it was then she approached residences. Sitabai was gradually making progress. At one time, she made the rounds to sell a single packet, but now she visited the colonies only after she got orders for 10–12 packets. She even fixed particular days to visit different areas.

In fact, she religiously fixed Thursdays for visiting the spot before Swami Samarth Temple! She became more confident than before. After legitimately completing the formalities, she started receiving aid from Zilla Udyog Kendra. In 2005, she got a subsidy from the Zilla Udyog Kendra and took a loan of 16 lakh rupees from Baroda Bank to purchase the present plot. A building was constructed on the place. She was selling door-to-door up to 2006. As the business began to grow, she sold her products through consignment stores. At first, some shopkeepers refused to stock her products, but eventually things changed. They began to treat her with more respect when her product range increased.

Increasing the product range required more than just workers. It necessitated buying new machinery and equipment. The Mohites got the information that the shredder machine they needed was available with Ganeshrao Mhatre of Digra. However, they did not find it acceptable to make such a huge investment only for shredding gooseberries. After some prior discussions, they placed a special order for a big machine that could shred gooseberries as well as raw mangoes. Sitabai explains, 'Iron is unsuitable for gooseberries, and therefore, the machine was made from stainless steel. The machine was built with the valuable help of Ichalkaranji's factories. They designed it as per our needs. Previously, we used steel forks to perforate the berries. When the machine was installed the same process could be carried out faster and gave far better results. It is also possible to prepare sweet lemon-pickle using this machine.'

Sitabai has received a total of 46 awards. Of the two awards received from the government of Maharashtra State, she has won one award in a competition between the entrepreneurs of Maharashtra and Goa. The other three women awardees were from cities each running a business with an annual turnover of nearly a crore rupees. Out of the 700 applicants just 130 had been short listed of which only four would be awarded. When it was Sitabai's turn to be interviewed, she questioned, 'Will it be an oral interview or a written interview?' All the judges were baffled by Sitabai's candour. In order to clarify, Sitabai explained, 'I am illiterate. If it is a written test, then I have to leave...' The judges informed her that there will be three rounds of oral- interviews, and a camera will be present in the last round. Sitabai carried

the day by succeeding each round of interview and won the award.

Along with the award Sitabai also received a free package tour from Kesari Travels for Bangkok, Thailand, and Pataya. These international trips seemed quite challenging for Sitabai who was illiterate and had not the faintest idea about English. Sitabai not only overcame the challenge, but also won the hearts of the accompanying team members. She tells, 'It is sufficient to know three phrases in English. They are Thank You, Sorry, and Good Morning.' During the trip the group members were seated in seven different buses. She was welcomed by the all members to accompany them, and so each day she had to board a different bus. She conversed with everyone during her travels. She also gave an hour-long speech before an international assembly of entrepreneurs assisted by someone volunteered who acted as an interpreter. 'I often receive calls from at least one of the 300 ladies who toured with me. The amla has transformed my life,' tells Sitabai movingly. Jijamata Krishibhushan Award, Maharashtra Udyogini Award, and Sahyadri Channel's Udyojika Award are also among the awards she has bagged.

The Mohites faced great hardships and overcame their miseries through sheer determination. Sitabai has great respect for her husband. She tells, 'He is the modern-day Mahatma Phule. In a society which does not permit women from even leaving the confines of the house, Rambhau had encouraged his wife to go abroad. It was impractical to wear a saree in a foreign land. They secretly bought some tailor-made dresses to avoid the chagrin of family members. Sitabai changed into new her dress before boarding her flight. After returning from her trip she wrapped away her dresses. None of her in-laws know about this till date!

Sitabai's has always worked hard with a long-term vision. Sitabai is well-informed not only with



the operations of her machines, but also how to repair their each and every part. If a mechanical glitch occurs in any of the machines, she immediately fetches the repair tools and fixes the machine by herself. Sitabai's believes in repairing most mechanical faults herself and does not depend on a mechanic who would waste both time and money. Sitabai's children attend school. She wants her children to learn for the sake of education and in the future manage the family business instead of pursuing jobs. She is of the viewpoint that it is more worthwhile investing money in a business than wasting a fortune for getting a job. As per her a business apart from being a strong personal source of income also creates job opportunities for others.

She aspired to learn many new things when she entered the business world. However, she discovered that successful entrepreneurs don't openly share ideas and instead found small entrepreneurs to be better guides and more helpful. After their successful journey so far, the admirable couple still work for at least two hours in the farm. They haven't abandoned their industrious side.

When in the business she wanted to learn many things. But big businessmen don't tell the truth, she frankly expresses her opinion. Instead small entrepreneurs are more humane and give better guidance. After this long-term struggle, yet this admirable couple works in the farm for two hours. They haven't forgotten their rugged and industrious life. At one time Rambhau and Sitabai have worked as farm labourers (saldaar) in Kharpudi's Krisha Vigyan Kendra's (KVK) farm numbered 33. Sitabai is now the member of KVK's Advisory Committee. Yesterday's saldaar has today become an advisor. Sitabai's successful story reminds us of the words by Napoleon Hill – Education comes from within; you get it by struggle and effort and thought.

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Sitabai Mohite

Shri Bholeshwar Fal va Bhajipala Prakriya Udyog, Sindhi-
Kalegaon, District -Jalna

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Pusaram Mundada

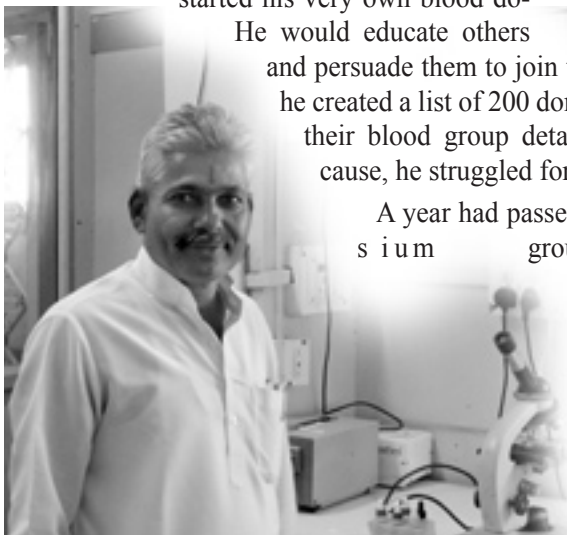
In this world, there is one such donation where the giver and the receiver develop blood ties – ‘Blood donation’. To increase the count of members serving this noble cause, Pusaramji Mundada has been striving since two decades with the help of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

It was just another day of the year 1992 for Pusaram, seated at his jaggery shop. A man hurriedly rushed towards him and asked him, ‘A patient is in urgent need of blood. Would you please volunteer?’ Pusaram thought for a moment. He had never donated blood before. Moreover, the patient in this case was a total stranger to him. But, Pusaram followed the man to Dr. Suryakant Hayatnagarkar’s blood bank. After donating blood, Pusaram stepped out, but something in him had changed. The act of saving someone’s life filled Pusaram with a new sense of fulfilment and joy. ‘Blood donation’ suddenly became his new-found interest. From then on, Pusaram

started his very own blood donation drive.

He would educate others on this topic and persuade them to join the cause. In time he created a list of 200 donors and collected their blood group details. In this noble cause, he struggled for almost a year.

A year had passed by. The gymnasium grounds were witness to Shakhas conducted by the members of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Pusaramji followed his



own healthy regime of a morning walk. One fine morning, after his morning walk, Pusaramji was on his way home. He was followed by some RSS volunteers. Amongst them was Shri D. D. Kulkarni, an engineer from Aurangabad. All of them became acquainted over tea. In time Pusaramji joined the Shakha. At the end of 1994, the RSS volunteers were seated in a meeting presided by the Sangh's senior regional Sanghchalak, Prahladji Abhyankar. After some formal discussions, Prahladji questioned everyone about their favourite pastime. When Pusaram's turn came, he disclosed his concern for blood donation and how he had gathered a list of 200 potential blood donors. Prahladji listened carefully to Pusaramji's story to the end. He knew he had found a gem of person. Prahladji was always on the lookout for such gems for it was his speciality to polish them and hone them to perfection.

Prahladji asked Pusaram, 'If you are indeed so sincere towards this cause, then why don't you open a blood bank in Jalna?' Pusaramji answered, 'Since long this has been my dream, but from what I know that such an undertaking would require no less than 25 lakh rupees. Moreover, I would also need to go to Delhi where I will have to go through a troublesome and time-consuming bureaucratic process.' In those times, 25 lakhs was indeed a huge sum. Prahladji did not comment; however he told Pusaram, 'Girish Kuber the Sangh's Vibhaag Pracharak would be soon visiting Jalna. You could discuss the matter with him.' Was Pusaramji really interested? Only time could tell.

A year and half passed by. At the end of 1996, Girish Kuber along with Nana and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Pratishthan's, Dr Satish Kulkarni, arrived in Jalna. Several discussions later, Pusaramji was happy to learn from Dr Satish Kulkarni that an investment of 10 lakhs would be sufficient for starting the blood bank. Also Dr Jugalkishorji Bhala was interested in starting a blood bank. In 1997, a decisive meeting was held at the residence of Vishwa Hindu Parishad's Chief minister, Shri. Madhusudanji Mutyal and plans for starting a blood bank were finalised. On 29 July 1999, after two years of rigorous pursuit, the blood bank was finally realised. Pusaramji saw his dream come true before his very own eyes.

Pusaram was sentimental at heart. He had faced many hard-

ships early in his life. He was born on 10 November 1962, in Gunj Khurd Village of Pathri Taluka, Parbhani. His father ran a small Kirana store. When Pusaram was nearly two years, they shifted to the Dukri Pimpri. Pusaram attended school in the nearby Utvad village up to class 9 and he passed his class 10 exams in 1975 from Janata High School, Jalna. He earnestly wished to study further, but poor economic conditions forced him to work in Jalna's jaggery market at Harikishan Goyal's shop. Later, he worked in Laxminarayan Ramkishan Nagarwal's jaggery shop. In 1989, nearly after 13 years of toil and labour, he started his own jaggery shop in partnership with Nanakram Ramkishan Mantri and Baburao Paachfule. Their partnership dissolved in 2002 and Pusaramji began to independently run his jaggery mart. The business was as usual – goods arrive in the market and are sold off. Perhaps, with time jaggery's sweetness had mingled with his heart.

Though an emotional person at heart, he was accurate in his business dealings. This was reflected in his visit to Delhi, in 1997, where he tactfully managed to dodge the corrupt bureaucracy and acquire a license without spending a single paisa. Today, his Jankalyan blood bank operates smoothly on the second floor of a building near Amar-Chaya Talkies on the Shivaji Putla Road. Soon, an independent blood bank worth 1 crore will be established at the old cotton market's (now Chattrapati Shivaji Sankul) wing no. 3. At present the blood bank is managed by a staff of 18 – 2 doctors, 1 managing officer, 2 PRO's, 5 technicians, 2 receptionists, 1 computer operator, 4 peons, and a driver. The bank is equipped with centrifuge machines for separating plasma, platelet and paxil, and it has the required storage facilities. It also boasts of a bloodmobile, which was donated by Devgiri Nagri Sahakari bank's Shri Vijay Hulsurkar during his tenure in 2004–2005.

The blood bank has provided blood to up to 40 thousand patients till date, conducted 1132 camps, provided blood to nearly 40 thalassemic patients, and distributed nearly 1150 blood bags for free. Here the blood is donated to patients for free except for the processing charges and in return they appeal to the people to volunteer for blood donation. They have maintained their continuous efforts to appeal to people to donate blood. For this, they have also set up three

Prabodhan centres.

The first blood bank cost nearly 10 lakh rupees. On the surface this number game appears easy, but for Pusaram and his patrons this had been a very challenging task. Eventually, people's attitude towards blood donation was changing. It took nearly 2 years to raise these 10 lakhs from nearly 364 generous individuals and on 22 July 1999 the blood bank was ready. After that nearly 20 lakhs were funded for the Raktvighatan Clinical Laboratory. The money was raised only in six months. This was possible only due to the people's increased faith in the cause. The new land requires nearly 1 crore. Dr Sunil Goyal has taken special initiative in this matter and nearly 50 lakhs have been raised. The remaining lap is still to be covered. Shri Banarasidas Jindal has donated 1 lakh, Assam tea's Rameshbhai Patel has donated a lakh, Mahyco's Bradrinarayan Barwale has promised 1 lakh and has already funded a machine worth 1 lakh 62 thousand. With their combined efforts and many others this blood bank is being realized.

Pusaramji says, 'The blood bank was set up due to the efforts and support provided by many others. I cannot really take the credit. This blood bank stands today because of the society.' This is true. Such an undertaking is not possible without the society's co-operation. But, what is also true is that it requires a real motivator to direct the society towards such a noble cause and Pusaram is the man on the job. Pusaram recalls a memorable incident in his life. Pusaram's birthday on 10 November is celebrated in Mondha by organizing a blood donation camp. On 4 November the blood bank phoned in the mart to inform the critical depletion in blood stock. This indeed was a serious issue. All of Mondha was informed – 'Today is Pusaramji's birthday and a blood camp will be organized.' On that day nearly 40 bottles of blood was collected. Someone in the crowd remembered that it was not Pusaram's birthday that day. To this Pusaram said, 'The date hardly matters. The blood collection is more important...'

The blood bank's inauguration on 24 July 1999 by Dr. Badri-nayan Barwale and Dr. Ashok Kukde, was soon followed by the inauguration of the Prabodhan centre by Jalna's Krishi Utpaan Bazaar Samiti's Sabhapati Shir Narayan Chavan. Pusaram definitely had

some hidden agenda behind his invitation. After walking up the two floors and inaugurating the blood bank Pusaramji indirectly hinted to Narayan Chavanji, 'Could you please decrease the stairs on the two floors?' Narayanrao mentally took a note of the matter and after two years allotted the land to the blood bank. For namesake, the blood bank acquired the land on lease basis. As the complications of allotting such a land for Non-agricultural purpose arose. Pusaram approached the concerned authorities to resolve the matter and the place was acquired by the blood bank.

Pusaram has donated blood for nearly 64 times. He is truly obsessed with his cause of blood donation. The blood bank is currently at a loss of 27 lakh rupees, but it owes only about 3 lakhs. Who will bear this loss? Pusaramji has an answer, but he prefers to keep it a secret. Only this much can be revealed that he is raising this money from 44 individuals who are donating money on an yearly basis. If every individual our society could even contribute a small share of their earnings for this 'life-giving' venture then such an organization need not be at loss.

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Pusaram Mundada

Jankalyan Blood Bank, Near Amar-Chaya Talkies, Jalna



Rahul

Metal

Industries has been manufacturing lead seals since 1990. It has become a leading supplier of lead seals to Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Its products have also entered into the markets of Madhya Pradesh. Smt. Manisha Mehunkar is the woman behind this successful company. She has the full support of her husband Shri Subhash Mehunkar. Their son, Rahul Mehunkar, too has entered the business, following in his parent's footsteps.

Smt. Meenakshi Mehunkar hails from Khamgaon. She acquired higher second-



ary education with a major in Commerce. She never imagined that she would own her own business, but her husband encouraged her to think big.

She was born into a middle-class family. Her parents worked as teachers in a High School in Khamgaon. Her husband Subhash Mehunkar works for NRB Company in Jalna. Shri Mehunkar is from Deulgaon-Raja. He acquired education in Khamgaon. He got admitted to ITI to pursue a Fitter Diploma Program in 1978. In 1980, while he was still in ITI, he was offered a job by Bajaj Tempo Ltd.,

Manisha Mehunkar

Meter boxes are sealed with lead seals to tamper-proof them against dishonest customers.

Chances are that these lead seals have been manufactured in Rahul Metal Industries, which is run by Mehunkar family. In the past, the lead seal market was dominated by companies in Calcutta and Chennai. After Smt. Mehunkar founded Rahul Metal Industries in 1990, she was able to capture the lead seal market in Maharashtra and expand her business to as far as Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. RMI is also a leading manufacturer of bearing components.

Akurdi, in a campus interview. He worked as a Final Inspector with Bajaj. In 1982, he quit Bajaj and joined NRB Company, Jalna. He tied the knot with Meenakshi in 1984. They lived in a rented house in Jalna. After their marriage, the couple struggled to improve their economic status. Shri Mehunkar decided to develop some profitable sideline after work hours. After Shri Ramesh Magre gave him some useful tips, he discovered the opportunity of producing lead seals for seed bags. Coincidentally, the machine he needed for producing lead seals was available with Shri Sunil Raithata. He brought the machine home and conducted some trials. He approached various companies with his samples and bagged his first order from Vijay Seeds Company. This was the year of 1990.

Shri Mehunkar purchased the raw material from Mumbai and supplied the finished product to the companies. Smt. Mehunkar supervised the work done by the hired operators at home. After 6–8 months their workload increased to such an extent that it became unmanageable to fulfill the orders on time even with two machines. Moreover, they were using old and manual machines. The machine processed 10–12 kg of raw material each day. Five-hundred units could be produced from a kilo of raw material. In view of the increased workload, it was necessary for them to increase the daily output. Shri Mehunkar used his technical expertise and was successful in making the machines automatic. Even after the operators took sufficient breaks, there was a five-fold increase in the output. It was a major break-

through and everyone was delighted. Mr. Mehunkar obtained a loan of 6000 rupees from NRB's indigenous bank to buy the first machine. He took out a loan of 25,000 rupees from Andhra Bank to buy the second machine. Later the output from the three machines failed to meet the growing demand.



Therefore, in 1995, Shri Mehunkar arranged a loan of 1 lakh rupees from SBI and bought yet another machine. With these four machines, Smt. Meenakshi has managed to achieve an annual turnover of nearly 20–22 lakh rupees.

NRB outsourced basic work such as the manufacturing of bearing components and carried out the final processing such as hardening, grinding, and assembly. After Shri Mehunkar came to know about NRB's special requirement, he discussed the matter with his wife. Meenakshi immediately decided to take up this new challenge. Subhash too was ready to support her.

In August 2006, they purchased an auto-lathe machine and a regular lathe machine. They started to carry out their business operations



in a small, rented shed in MIDC area. They processed the tubular raw-material supplied by NRB according to its requirements. Meenakshi got more enthusiastic after she noticed that there was a great demand for their products. She suggested to Subhash

that it was a right time to buy a new machine. After doing some number crunching, they made the decision of buying two new, high-precision CNC machines. They could buy the machines because they had nearly repaid their previous loans. Soon after the new machines were installed, their son also entered into the business. Rahul earned his mechanical engineering degree in 2011. He has been overseeing the work in the new unit for over two years. He says, 'There is a tremendous scope in the automobile sector in the near future. I am quite fortunate that my parents have already developed a solid base for me. I have many plans to expand the business further.' The Mehunkars have purchased the machines from Bangalore's Ace Micromatic Company. They say that they have found zero-maintenance machines to be more efficient than regular machines. Know-

ing perfectly well the pitfalls of depending on a single client, they are always trying to attract new customers. They are also conducting trials to develop some new products.

They express their gratitude for the invaluable help and cooperation extended by Shri Magare, Shri Raithata, the manager of NRB, Shri Sanjay Rodge, and Vansantrao Devdeshmukh of Khamgaon. Subhash Mehunkar speaks from his experience that one should not venture into a business without the knowledge of its finer details. Meenakshi manages both the business and the accounts of the two units.

Meenakshi has won three awards for being a successful entrepreneur. In 1994, she received the first prize on a district-level from the Udyog Sanchanalaya. In 1996, she was awarded the Marathwada Bhushan Puraskar. In 2001, she received the Best Woman Entrepreneur National Award from then Union Minister of State for Small Scale Industries, Vasundhara Shinde. She says, 'A business not only takes care of one's self-interests, but also helps to contribute towards the welfare of the society. It helps to improve one's economic conditions and social standing, and it also serves the interest of the society by creating job opportunities.'

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Meenakshi Mehunkar

Rahul Metal Industries, Plot No. 31, Vrindavan Colony, Jalna



Udupi is a town in south-west Karnataka. It is steeped in rich cultural traditions and a vibrant history. It is known for its scenic landscapes and scores of ancient temples. The town lends its name to its indigenous vegetarian cuisine, which has become world-famous. The spiritually-charged atmosphere of Udupi evokes a sense of tranquillity.

Vasantkumar Rao, a professor of chemistry, is among Udupi's renowned personalities. Vidya was born in Karkala to Shri. Vasantkumar Rao and Smt. Vimla Rao on 19 August 1968.

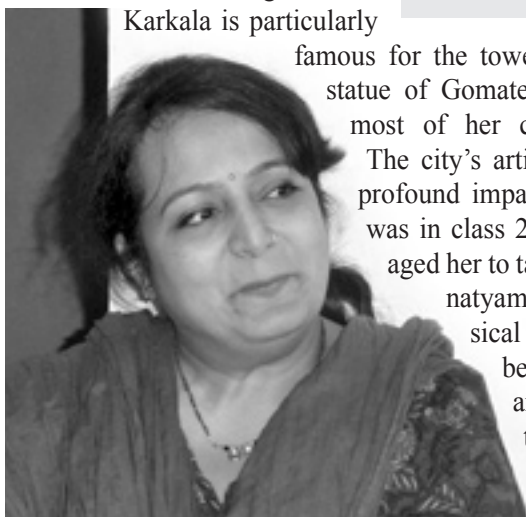
Karkala is particularly

famous for the towering fifty-seven feet statue of Gomateshwara. Vidya spent most of her childhood in Udupi.

The city's artistic heritage made a profound impact on her. When she was in class 2, her parents encouraged her to take lessons in Bharatnatyam and Carnatic Classical Music. This was the beginning of Vidya's artistic journey. Under the direction of her guru, Vidya often participated in

Vidya Shankar Rao

Art is manifestation of the sublime union of creativity and imagination. It is a discipline passed down the ages by devout gurus, to be long cherished and treasured by mankind. In terms of artistic talent, Jalna is blessed with Vidya Rao, a mentor of Indian classical arts. The Natyanjali Academy of Dance and Music symbolizes her commitment to preserve our invaluable cultural heritage.



dance- and music-related programs organized during school gatherings and various festivals. Besides participating in such programs, she took her studies seriously. This was partly because of her proper upbringing and the educational orientation at home.

After matriculation, Vidya got admission to college for science studies where she joined the artistic group of Samooha Kalavidaru. She took part in the activities of the group which continuously performed novel experiments in the fields of classical dance and music. Vidya participated in various competitions and won many awards. She successfully passed the senior grade exams in Bharatnatyam and Carnatic Classical Music of Karnataka Senior Secondary Board. Vidya also passed class 12 with a good score. She had carefully balanced college lectures, studies, and exams, alongside her intensive training of dance and music. She had grown weary of this busy schedule. She decided to opt for arts studies for her higher education as she could give more time for her artistic pursuits and easily manage her studies. She disclosed her plans to her father. However, as a professor of chemistry, her father was predisposed to science. Vasantkumar chidingly said, 'I don't mind you learning dance and music, but you must have a bachelor's degree in science.' Vidya had little choice but to comply.

Vidya's college admission for a B.Sc. degree was followed by a rigorous schedule of attending lectures, training in dance and music, and participating in the activities of Samooha Kalavidaru. She was hardly aware of how the day passed by. She had to bear this owing to her father's insistence. However, today Vidya gratefully admits, 'Though I took the decision was at the behest of my father, I personally gained from the experience. Because I sincerely pursued my studies and co-curricular activities, it became necessary to allocate my time to everything. Thus, I perfected the skill of time management. This has proved very valuable throughout my life.'

At home, talks of Vidya's marriage were already underway. In 1988, she was married to Jalna's Shankar Rao, her cousin sister's brother-in-law. After marriage, she had to stay back at Udupi for her final year exams. It was only in 1989 that she arrived in Jalna, at her in-laws, for the very first time. She knew very little about the city from what she had read in the books. After her arrival in Jalna,

she had the most awful experience! Vidya tells, ‘We arrived late at night in the city. It was a fine house, and all family members were so gentle and accommodating that I never felt I had left Udupi. However, as soon as I stepped outside in the morning, I had goose bumps all over my body. I was utterly disgusted at the sight of donkeys grazing nearby, and pigs grunting and wallowing in the gutters. I had never come across anything like this in Udupi...’ Despite the existing odds of the city, Vidya got accustomed to its way of life and unified with its culture.

Vidya specially mentions the great support and encouragement she received from her parents-in-law. She is proud of her mother-in-law Shyamala Rao. In 1981, Shyamala Rao, then an official of the local Innerwheel Club, had organized for Vidya’s first performance in Jalna. The event was the club’s district-level conference. Vidya’s graceful and mesmerizing recital of ‘Dashavataram’ received a thunderous ovation. She not only earned the admiration of the audience, but soon became a well-known name in Jalna’s circles. Vidya started receiving inquiries from eager parents about training their children. Vidya believed it was time to pass on her artistic legacy to the new generation. In 2000, Vidya formally established the ‘Natyanjali Academy of Dance and Music’. The academy was inaugurated by celebrated singer Usha Mangeshkar. Vidya was previously familiar with only Kannada and English. Today, she thoroughly understands Hindi and Marathi and satisfactorily speaks these languages.

In Ambad, each year, celebrations mark the day of Datta Jayanti. This festival was first initiated by Govindrao Jalgaonkar. In 1990 and 1991, as part of the Datta Jayanti festivities, Vidya had presented her performances in Bharatnatyam and Carnatic Classical Music.

Vidya was totally occupied in training the students and performing on various prestigious platforms until Sharanya was born. This almost put a stop to Vidya’s disciplined practice (riyaz) for nearly a year. However, Vidya always maintained a strong bond with her art. Soon after, she took a three-month refresher course from her mentor at Udupi. In 2005, she again retired from her class, for an eight-month trip to Trichur in Kerala. There she took training in Mohiniattam and Kuchipudi from the Kerala Kala Mandalam, one

of the most venerated institutions for the classical arts. She also studied the Panchratna Kirtana (famous devotional compositions by Saint Tyagaraja, deemed very significant in Carnatic Music). She could not learn all this while she was in school or in college. Her daily schedule involved intensive ten hours of training. Despite the demanding routine, Vidya wisely took care of her health and perfectly managed her training.

Vidya's background is in Carnatic Music, and she teaches as per the curriculum of Maharashtra Gandharva College. Each year she trains thirty students. Vidya's artistic prowess can be judged by the achievements of her students. In 2006, two of her students performed the 'Arangetram', a significant debut performance by accomplished students after completion of their training. Another of her students passed out Visharad Purna (equivalent to graduation degree) from A.B. Gandharva College and is a Bharatnatyam guru. While training her students from 6 to 50 years of age, Vidya says, 'Dance is an art form that should be learnt as a discipline. It is incorrect to perceive it as a weight-reduction program.' Vidya's generous side is revealed by the free training that she gives to naturally-talented aspirants who cannot afford the course fee.

Vidya has enriched Jalna's traditional arts' realm through her academy. She has also given Jalna the taste of external creative talent by organizing events and promoting honourable artists, including Vidya Deshpande's (Nasik) Kathak, Arvind Azaad's (Pune) Tabla recital, Shrinivas Khatve's (Solapur) Bharatnatyam, Sharmila Rao's (Udupi) Carnatic violin recital, Aishwarya Venugopal's Bharatnatyam and many others.

Vidya says, 'One shouldn't learn simply to earn fame or accolades; however, one should learn with the spirit of gaining knowledge. Indian classical music and dance are disciplines that cannot be mastered in a short period. It requires Sadhana (genuine long-term study and practice). Mastery in these arts is only possible with steadfast commitment and diligent practice. The children should be encouraged to learn if they are willing. Parents have to refrain from unduly pressurizing their children. They should encourage children to watch TV channels like DD-Bharti and Doordarshan for developing their interest in Indian classical arts.'

Presently, Vidya conducts classes at Jalna's Adarsh Bhagini Mandal. Shortly, she will be conducting the classes at her spacious flat in Karva Nagar. It is the efforts of teachers and exponents like Vidya that our cultural legacy is safely preserved to be cherished by future generations. Vidya is worthy of her name as an overflowing educational resource of artistic and aesthetic talents, and Jalna is beyond doubt most fortunate to have her.

Vidya Rao

Natyanjali Academy of Dance and Music, Jalna



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In Jalna's

Vyankatesh-Nagar is a preschool opposite to Azad Maidan. Children less than five years old, attend this preschool. Since the past 16 years, Manisha Ravindra Puri has been managing the school built on the foundation of healthy child development. In the first year of its inception, she expected only five children to apply for admissions, but she was surprised when 35 kids turned up. Today, it stands as one of Jalna's finest schools.

Manisha was born in Selu on 15 January 1972. Her childhood and academic years were spent in Jalna. Manisha was raised in a well-to-do, business family. Her brother ran a confection-store named Prabhu Prasad. She never took her studies seriously owing to the lack of parental pressure; in fact, she was under no compulsion to be academically well qualified. Manisha attended St. Mary's High School. She was positively influenced by her friends when she was in

A 'Fun' School

Manisha Puri

'Children are God's divine angels.' These tiny tots need the utmost love and care. However, they also need a good preschool like the one started by Jalna's Manisha Puri. Manisha's dream to start a preschool was motivated by her love for children, and she was prepared to overcome any hurdle to realise it. Her preschool is the most sought after preschool in Jalna. This is her story...

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class 9, and thus, she became gradually ambitious. She decided to study hard. In her class 10 board exams, she scored 72%, and in her class 12 board exams, she scored 74%. Manisha pursued higher education from Mumbai's SNDT College, and obtained a Bachelor of Home Science degree in Child Development. In 1991, she arrived at Jalna and helped her brother manage the sweet shop.

At home, talks of Manisha's marriage were underway. Manisha was receiving many marriage proposals. Manisha's father believed in the compatibility of marriage documents (Iagna patrika) for better matchmaking, whereas Manisha considered emotional and mental compatibility between partners to be more important. Ravindra Puri, a friend of her two brothers, was then a regular visitor to their house. After the completion of his engineering studies from Pune, he was helping his father run a company that supplied plastic packages to the Defence Department. Both their houses were in the same neighbourhood and their families knew each other well. Manisha's brothers admired Ravindra and spoke highly of him.

Manisha and Ravindra fell in love with each other. Manisha insisted her father to match their marriage documents, which were found to be the most compatible. In 1993, their intermarriage was celebrated with full pomp and gaiety. Ravindra's father had tragically died in an accident in 1992 leaving Ravindra as the sole incharge of the factory. His business had run into a crisis as a result of some financial problems.

After Yash was born to Manisha in 1995, she met many of her in-laws in person. Most of them hailed from North India and were either doctors or engineers. Yash was adored by all family members, but after a year and a half, relatives would ask, 'Why haven't you sent him to school?' Manisha was new to the idea of sending small children to school, but after she was occasionally quizzed by her relatives, she became serious. Manisha loved children, and she came to the decision of starting a school! It also provided Manisha the opportunity to use her knowledge of child development. Starting a preschool would address her son's concern and help her husband to recover from the financial crisis.

Manisha started working for setting up a preschool. In the beginning, she expected not more than 4-5 enrolments. The couple

then stayed near Mission hospital, and Manisha was looking for a nearby place to start her pre-school. Dr Kabadia sent word to Manisha and offered her a vacant hall on the first floor of his hospital, and thus, the problem of a place for the pre-school was taken care of. She spread the word that she was starting a preschool through her friends. The preschool received a very good response. In the beginning, Manisha had expected only 5–6 students, but 35 students turned up. In 1996, assisted by a co-teacher and a lady caretaker, she started Fun School.

The idea of a preschool was a novel concept in Jalna. Children were taught to develop skills like independently eating their meals. They were disciplined to keep their hands off other's tiffin, but later Manisha found this type of discipline conflicted with the idea of sharing. The very next month, she set up a breakfast facility for children. This practice of providing breakfast to all students of Fun School continues to this day. Fun School's enrolments reached the fifty mark within three years, and the shortage of space was becoming more evident. In 1999, the nearby Nathani building became Fun School's new address, which had two spacious rooms, two verandahs, and a large playground. Things were getting more organized.

The children were grouped age-wise into different classes. Each teacher was assigned with a class of ten children. Manisha took the next decisive step of purchasing a plot in Jalna's Vyankatesh Nagar where she decided to build her school. Many dissuaded her from making such a bold investment, but Manisha stood her ground. No one in the city had ever built an independent building just for a preschool or a nursery. It was an ambitious project which required



more capital than was previously estimated. Priya thought it would be viable to build a house above the building, but she had to drop the idea after her school ran successfully. The Fun School moved to its present address in 2004. The school added three new floors within six years following the increasing number of admissions. Fun School presently has 11 classrooms, 300 students, and 30 teachers. The school still maintains a teacher-student ratio of 1:10.

During this time, many other pre-schools came up in Jalna, but they were hardly as successful as Fun School. Manisha's personal touch is the reason behind its success. She remembers the names of all present students as well as the past students of Fun School. She loves the innocence of childhood. She has truly made her passion her profession.

Fun School has become a very popular preschool in Jalna. Many parents are requesting Manisha to provide primary education. However, Manisha's position is clear; everyone has to live their personal life and spend quality time with one's family. Fun School offers four grades namely, Playgroup, Nursery, Junior KG, and Senior KG. The preschool starts after the students have chanted the Gayatri Mantra. Fun School celebrates all religious festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, and Id, with great enthusiasm. Manisha is giving serious thought to the requests she has received from many parents and is planning for the school's future development. The faith shown by parents on the school since the past fourteen years may be well-rewarded because Fun School may actually provide education up to class 10 in the near future...!

Besides the school, Manisha is also committed to a social cause. She is the secretary of Rotary Club Innerwheel Central. Each year she gives admission to five girls from an orphanage to her school and provides them free education. She wishes to continue this practice in the future.

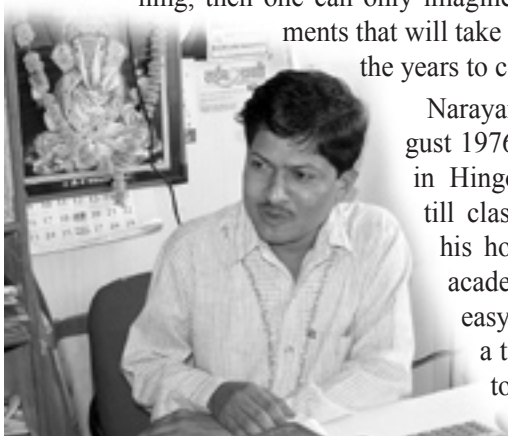
Manisha Puri

Fun School, Vyankatesh Nagar, Azad Maidan, Jalna



Near the Laxmi-Mata temple in Jalna's Sindhi Bazaar area is Mahalaxmi Complex. If you enter this area via the main road, you cannot miss a stationery shop with a particularly huge sign, 'Shrikant Paper Products'. A 35-year-old Narayan Sonaji Sonune sits at the counter of the shop. When you look at this successful and busy youth, you cannot imagine that twenty years ago he underwent many hardships. Once you hear his story, you will be surprised to know how far one can go on the basis of one's determination and efforts. However, Narayan considers his success to be the first milestone of his ambitious journey. If this is just the begin-

ning, then one can only imagine the exciting developments that will take place in his business in the years to come.



The King of Files

Narayan Sonune

To understand and admire the potential of a hard-working and an iron-willed soul, meet Shri Narayan Sonune. After he failed his SSC exams in three subjects and was rejected a seat for a vocational course of his choice, he somehow managed to pass class 12, but nothing could stop Narayan from becoming Jalna's leading manufacturer and distributor of stationery products. This is his inspiring story...

Narayan was born on 10 August 1976 in Ambheri, a village in Hingoli District. He learnt till class 2 in the comfort of his home, but his following academic years weren't so easy. Narayan had to walk a tiring stretch of 4-5 km to Khanapur daily to attend a school till he

completed class 7. He got admission to a school in Auda Naghnath for class 8. For class 9 and class 10, he attended a school in Jalna during which time his elder brother Subhash worked at Mahendra Seeds Company. He says, 'Though I could hardly write, it was very easy to pass a class at the village schools, but passing a class at Jalna's school was next to impossible.' His fears indeed came true when he failed miserably in his class 10 exams. He managed to clear the backlog by taking the exams in October. However, this was just the beginning of his academic nightmares. When applying for admission to college, Narayan failed to secure a seat for the vocational course of Storekeeping Management owing to limited seats. Without much choice, he applied for a seat in the commerce stream, but finally settled for a seat in the arts stream. He knew well that his brother's income wasn't enough to make ends meet, so he worked at the Maharashtra Typing Institute for a salary of 150 rupees after college hours. In 1993–94, after passing class 12, Narayan applied for a BA degree and at the same time took three jobs! In the daytime, he worked at Vikas Industries of MIDC; in the evenings, he helped one Mr. L. N. Acharya in pygmy collection work; at nights, he worked as an attendant for the phone booth near the bus depot. The first two hours of his night shift from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. were active-working hours. Later, he could go off to sleep.

In 1997, a change in the offing was about to relieve him from his tiresome work routine. MCED had organized an Industrial training camp at the Fulambrikar Drama Theatre. The project manager, Mr. Sudam Thote, was present at the event. The fee for attending the camp was 700 rupees. At the camp, Narayan got information that the Khadi Gram Udyog was providing free vocational training. Narayan left for Pune where he received three-months of free training in binding books and making files. He attended the course which started in the morning and continued till 4 o'clock in the evening. He stayed at a hostel which closed in the evening at 8 o'clock. After training hours, Narayan worked at a nearby printing press up to 8 p.m. and made little money.

After completing his training, he returned to Jalna. On the basis on his newly acquired skills, he submitted a loan proposal for the small-scale production of stationery items to the Zilla Udyog

Kendra. However, the loan's approval would take 4–5 months and Narayan was not going to sit idle until then. By the end of 1997, Narayan spotted a job advertisement in Lokmat for door-to-door selling of grinders. Narayan traveled to Aurangabad and took the job. He earned 2500 rupees a month. The experience gave him two advantages. Firstly, he received a steady income. Secondly, he learnt how to promote his products and talk effectively with customers. Interacting with customers had helped him break away from his reticent nature. During this period, he had both good and bad experiences, which proved to be useful lessons for his future.

In the meantime, Jalna's DIC had given Narayan the permission to proceed. He started approaching banks for getting a loan. Shri L. N. Archarya worked at Mahendra Seeds Company where his brother worked. Shri Acharya's wife, Smt. Acharya, who worked in Syndicate bank helped Narayan to get the loan by acting as his guarantor. In 1998, on the auspicious occasion of Gudi Padwa, Narayan used the loan to set up a workshop in Nal Galli area at a monthly rent of 500 rupees. In his new sense of excitement, he bought papers and raw material from the local markets, created files, and approached shops to stock his products. However, the market response for his products hardly lived up to his expectations. He discovered that his products were costlier than the products already available in the market. He realized his folly, but it was too late. His efforts to market directly and sell his products to companies met with limited success. In the starting and difficult phase of his business, Narayan took his first biggest order, worth 3800 rupees, from Mahendra Seeds Company. He soon took Shri Narendra Aggarwal's order for personalized files and another order from LIC. However, Narayan made marginal profits by selling his files for 5–6 rupees. Some clients even demanded for files personalized with their names for which Narayan had to set up a screen-printing facility in 1999.

Sometime later, Narayan faced another sobering experience. An institute of Parbhani had placed a big order with Narayan, but their precondition was that he would receive the full payment only after the order was fulfilled. The lack of capital compelled Narayan to take a loan at a 10% interest rate. Narayan fulfilled the order, but he received his payment after three months. He had to repay the inter-

est accrued for over three months from his own pocket. Narayan had understood the risk of raising capital by taking loans.

Narayan remained persistent. With his files, he approached Shri Narayanseth Bhartiya of Mahyco Company. Narayan showed him his files and offered to sell them at a competitive rate of 17 rupees each, which was well below the market rate of 25 rupees per file. Thus, he made a lucrative deal with Mahyco to provide box files and other types of files. He also got a similar order from Krishidhan. He expanded his business and his products reached as far as Aurangabad, Jalna, Beed, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nanded, Solapur and Barshi.

After his marriage in 2000, Narayan's wife helped him in the business. In the same year, a woman named Kavita Bai approached Narayan for a job. Since the past 10 years, she has been managing the workforce which today consists of 7–8 women and 4–5 men. Even people from other villages are a part of Narayan's workforce. In 2005, Narayan had to shift the workshop to its present location owing to the lack of adequate workspace. Within a year, he bought the rented shop. He purchased new machinery and equipment by obtaining loans which he repaid in due time. He also received the timely help of some good samaritans. Among them was Santosh Baheti who worked at Mahendra Seeds. Shri Baheti offered Narayan a loan at existing bank interest rate and without any paperwork. He had also helped Narayan in a similar way for purchasing the shop. In order to save travelling time, Narayan bought a flat in the same building in 2007.

Narayan's business grew. Besides Jalna's markets, his products reached the markets of other cities. He started receiving orders for regular files, box files, and many other stationery items. He decided to acquire the dealership of some companies. He also approached banks to get contracts for supplying stationery items. He



received many orders by participating at various exhibitions where he showcased his products. Most recently, Narayan has bought another shop just next to his existing shop where he has started distributorship of his products under the banner of Shrikant Paper Products.

Narayan has acquired all the necessary machinery for folder making, binding, and lamination. He is planning to start the production of notebooks. He has also passed a part of his hard-earned business to his relatives. He has supported them in setting up many binding and screen-printing units in different villages. Similarly, Narayan encouraged his brother, Subhash Sonune to develop his entrepreneurial spirit. During his academic years in Jalna, he had stayed with Subhash. He incentivized his brother to either help him in the stationery business or to set up a business of his own. Subhash responded aptly to Narayan's clarion call for economic independence. Subhash quit his job at Mahendra Seeds and started working on the 'Time Diary' project which was somewhat similar to Yellow Pages. In 2003, he introduced the Pocket Diary. Two years later, he came up with big diary exclusively for Jalnaites. In 2010, he introduced a 400-page diary which contained the complete information about Jalna district, and the phone numbers and addresses of local businessmen. The diary received many advertisements. Subhash Sonune and his nine-member team have established their base in Hingoli District.

Narayan has created a winning career from absolutely nothing. Although he had fallen prey to the educational system and was denied a seat for the vocational training course, Narayan took an off-beat path and carved out his own career. Now, he carries many others with him on the path to progress. His immediate plans include setting up a huge file production plant by buying up a large tract of land in Jalna's MIDC area. He is presently hunting for a suitable place to set up his plant. Soon, his file showroom will also take shape. He eagerly looks forward to the day when his files reach all across the state and eventually the entire nation.

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Narayan Sonune

Shrikant Paper Products, Near Laxmi-Mata Mandir, Sindhi Bazaar, Jalna



Bajaj

Auto's largest plant is at Aurangabad. In 2006, Rajiv Bajaj announced the plan to shift the plant's operations elsewhere due to its existing problems. Following the media-hype, his statement raked up a huge controversy in the industrial world. The ensuing commotion was apparent because Bajaj was the life-force of Aurangabad's industrial settlement. If the company closed down it would literally paralyze the dependent settlement. In these conditions, Jalna's Kailash Jhanjri took

over the plant's administration. Today, Bajaj's Aurangabad plant hails as its most efficient facility. Jhanjri's achieved this brilliant feat with the guidance of his seniors Pradeep Shrivastava, Ramesh Maheshwari, and C. P. Tripathi, and the co-operation received from his team. He has only two words to describe it – 'Consistency and Commitment'.

Kailash was born on 19 December 1963. Kailash's father, Jaikumar Jhanjri, worked as a sales representative at Jalna for a cutlery company based in Ahmedabad. Shri. Jaiku-

Kailash Jhanjri

Setting up one's own business or industry is an onerous task. It is even far more difficult to establish discipline and good-will and ensure steady progress in a mega industry. Kailash Jhanjri who successfully manages the largest plant of Bajaj Auto, India's major two-wheeler vehicle manufacturer, personifies commitment and persistence...



mar struggled hard as the only bread-winner for his family of four kids and a wife. On the bright side, all the four kids were studious. Kailash attended the Rashtriya Hindi School, and was ranked 16th in the class 10 board exams of 1979. In 1981, following his higher studies from JES College, he was ranked 14th in the class 12 board exams. He topped the medical rankings and was ranked close to 20 in engineering, yet he opted for mechanical engineering at Aurangabad's Govt. College. During his schooldays and academic years, Kailash did not receive tuition or attend any private class. It was a different period. Pandurang Govind Ankule his school principal would specially invite the bright students to his home four months prior to the exams and push them to take more efforts. Following suit, in class 12, were Lahoti Sir, Aboti Sir, Sanghai Sir, and his paternal uncle Jhanjri Sir. These professors went out of their way to help students without worrying about their workload.

After his matriculation, Kailash won most scholarships. He received the National Merit Scholarship for his engineering studies. He received accommodation to the student hostel. The only financial aid he received from home was to pay for his food expenses at the hostel. Kailash was happy that he didn't have to burden his father.

He has fond memories of his engineering college. He clearly remembers college principal Idate Sir, Mechanical's Bokankar Sir, Dhobe Sir, Chudival Sir, and Kadam Sir. He became disciplined and hard-working though the positive influence of the dedicated team of best professors, well-equipped and modern lab facilities, and a rich library. This permanently imprinted the 'no short-cut' ideology in his mind.

In 1985, he became a Mechanical Engineer and was selected by Bajaj Auto in a campus interview. Since that day, for almost 26 years, he has been a valued member of the Bajaj family. In his first two years at Bajaj, he worked at the Akurdi plant as a trainee engineer. In 1987, he was positioned at Aurangabad where he worked in the Manufacturing, Production, Machining, and Assembly departments. He took advantage of this opportunity to learn many new things. Since 2000, he was assigned to head each process. In 2005, he was the head of the three-wheeler plant. During this time, he increased the annual production capacity of three-wheel-

ers to three lakh thirty thousand units from two lakh units, without any additional machinery or manpower. This achievement greatly impressed the management. It was also the period when the previously mentioned episode occurred. The management showed great confidence in Kailash by entrusting him with the two-wheeler plant and the administration of the Aurangabad plant. This was a golden opportunity as well as a testing time for Kailash. In the prevailing stressful situation, everyone's eyes were on him. 'Will I be responsible for the closing down the company or can I resurrect a visibly failing project?' He too was tensed. Overcoming this challenge was going to be a crucial test of his experience.

The company's work culture had seriously deteriorated, which led to Rajiv Bajaj's controversial statement, and movements to close down the Aurangabad unit were underway. It was in these settings that Kailashji had to work. Guided by Shri. Pradeep Shrivastava, Bajaj's COO, he began strategizing for his new undertaking. It was nothing short of a super challenge. The workers were gripped with a feeling of insecurity. Efforts were being made to revive their confidence. They received special training to develop a favourable attitude. 'Our plant is one of the best in India. We annually manufacture 15 lakh motorcycles and 4.5 lakh commercial vehicles. Today, we are a leading company in India, but if we don't improve, our position will be jeopardised. Many big companies are waiting to overtake us in the Indian market. If we give them the opportunity, in a year's time, we will be completely grounded. Where will we go, if the company closes?' The workers reacted positively to such meaningful appeals. The workers were assured that the company cares for them through illustrative speeches. Later, with the introduction of the VRS scheme, a monthly pension of nearly 8000 rupees to workers was also facilitated. These confidence-building measures had a positive impact on the workers. Another novel exercise to handover the plant's responsibility solely to the workers by withdrawing floor engineers also met with success. When workers were invited to handle additional work responsibility, 700 of the 3300 workers volunteered. After giving them preliminary guidance they were assessed and 300 workers were short-listed for further training. They were given soft- and hard- skills training. They were also appraised for their problem-solving skills and presented with a real picture of

the company's different departments. Since the past two years, the very workers who once volunteered to handle multiple responsibilities are managing the entire floor. The workers were comfortable with nobody bossing them around, and the engineers were happy to discontinue the floor work in exchange for engineering-related work. Most recently, an agreement was made for the New Year. This was the first time an agreement was made in a peaceful setting. Kailashji informs, 'Why does the worker approach a third person? After discussing the matters with us if he doesn't get justice, then he is obviously going to seek outside help. In the new framework, a system was devised for voicing their concerns. By making certain their issues are effectively sorted out, the occurrences of seeking outside help ended.' Bajaj contributes a major percentage towards Aurangabad's economy. If Bajaj runs smoothly, then it is a smooth ride for all the workers and the city. This was the driving notion behind the workers' support, and once more a winning work culture was re-established in Bajaj.

Kailashji is satisfied with his journey so far. He proudly mentions the guidance and unwavering support received from Shri. Pradeep Shrivastava, COO; and Shri. C. P. Tripathi, Vice-President, Corporate Social Responsibility. He humbly attributes the change in the company to exceptional team work. He says that the change was possible owing to the active co-operation extended by, recently retired, Shri. Athalye, and all the presently working Shris – Firodia, Mohagaonkar, Patki, and Pilankar.

Kailashji is significantly proud of the fact that the company



management showed great trust in him. He has received offers from many companies and was lured with very handsome packages, but he has remained genuine with only Bajaj. While revealing this, he also provides a rational explanation. ‘Bajaj’s environment is not to be seen elsewhere. I joined here as a trainee engineer. I received the opportunity to perform every type of work. There was vast scope for performing. I was familiarised with the operations of various companies like Toyota, which is considered as the bible of the automotive field and Bajaj became the medium. I studied the systems of various companies and received a lot of exposure. I also visited the finest auto companies across the world because of Bajaj. I could take management lessons from various top-notch international-level management institutions. Our MD enjoys reading. He provides references for the best books. He has also gifted us with 5–6 books. Here, I have received ample opportunities. I am totally satisfied...’ Even throughout these discussions he held in his hand a book by Eckhart Tolle titled the ‘The Power of Now’! This book too had been suggested by his MD.

He modestly explains, ‘My experience is limited to comment on many things, but there is one thing I would like to say – don’t run behind shortcuts. There is no alternative to hard work. Be persistent, keep your commitments, fix your goal, and give your best performance. Life will present you with plenty of opportunities. You are bound to make it big...’

Shri. Kailash’s wife, Smt. Pinky Jhanjri is proud of him. Other than being totally content with the twenty years of their life together, there is one other quality she admires most about Shri. Kailash and that is that he gives time to all. He doesn’t bring company tensions home. Shri. Kailash enjoys reading and has read many excellent books. He likes to spend quality time with his family, but he cannot recall the last time when he had a merry time with his family. In the future, he plans to make time for experiencing the different arts and having an absolutely fun time with his family.

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Kailash Jhanjri

Plant In-charge, Bajaj Auto, Waluj MIDC, Aurangabad



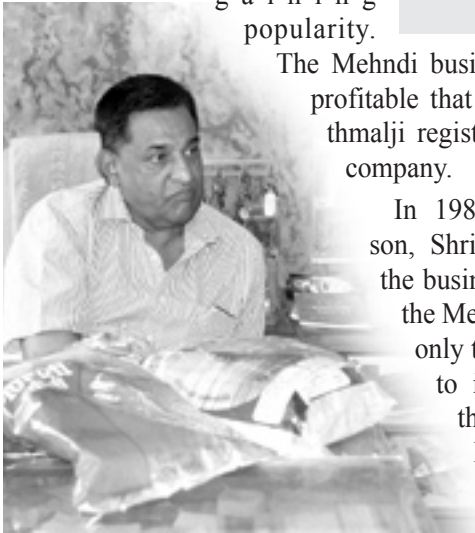
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Shri

Nathmalseth

Mutha had been successfully running his Jain Kirana Store in Kadrabad since 1952. The store met the many needs of the locals and soon became widely popular in Jalna. In 1970, the store introduced a new product for its customers – the Mehndi – a tattooing product donned by Indian women during festivities and special occasions since antiquity. The Mehndi is imported from Rajasthan's Sojat city exclusively for Jalna's citizens. It is sold by weight to customers. This high-grade Mehndi started

g a i n i n g
popularity.



The Mehndi business turned out to be so profitable that on 4 October 1973, Nathmalji registered his 'Jain Industries' company.

In 1980, Nathmalseth Mutha's son, Shri Surajmal Mutha joined the business. For almost ten years the Mehndi business was limited only to Jalna. Surajmal decided to introduce the Mehndi to the Aurangabad market.

He clearly recalls his first experience. He traveled to Aurangabad with

Lasting Impressions

Surajmal Mutha

Auspicious or special occasions in Indian households are marked by women donning the Mehndi on their palms. The magical Mehndi is made from the green henna leaves, yet it dyes the skin in a range of exotic colours from the bright red to the dark black. The story is of the businessman who has created his own brand called Ganapati Chap Mehndi and has literally left an impression on Jalna's palms!

25 kg of Mehndi packets. After a day's labour, he managed to sell only five kg of Mehndi. In those times, a kilo of Mehndi was rated at Rs. 4.50. A disappointed Surajmal returned to Jalna. At first, he was so confident about the quality of the Mehndi that he expected to sell the complete 25 kg of Mehndi. Nathmalseth was a man of experience and patience. He counselled his son and advised him to be patient and persistent. In a few days, Surajmal made his second business trip to Aurangabad. His father's sound advice proved to be valuable. On his previous trip, he had approached only a few well-known shopkeepers, but this time he approached other shops to stock his Mehndi. The good thing was that he succeeded in selling the entire 25 kg of Mehndi he had carried with him! Surajmal had regained his confidence. After 8–10 days, he made yet another trip to Aurangabad and explored new and more lucrative markets for



his product. He did very good business. His father's continuous encouragement spirited his ambitions. As the demand for the Mehndi increased, he carried even larger bags of Mehndi and waited eagerly for the bus to Aurangabad. As the days passed, his luggage became heavier. Instead of selling loose Mehndi, he started selling Mehndi in fifty-gram packets. He bought the packets from Ahmedabad and filled them with Mehndi. Surajmal also started working towards expanding his distributor network. Whenever he visited Beed to meet his in-laws, he would stock his Mehndi packets with the local shopkeepers. Even there it was praised for its quality and received a good response. Surajmal started supplying his Mehndi to many other cities. In the next three years, he developed a network of sixty distributors, and his Mehndi reached as far as Nagpur, Nanded, Solapur, and Manmad.

The Mehndi gained popularity because it was chemical-free and very effective. The demand for Surajmal's Mehndi gradually increased. However, Surajmal realised that he had overlooked a potential risk in the business. The Mehndi was imported from Sojat in powdered form and packaged in Jalna, but the likelihood of its adulteration during import would jeopardize the entire business. This very thought caused Surajmal to take preventive measures. In 2000, Surajmal began importing Mehndi leaves instead of powdered Mehndi. The imported Mehndi leaves was ground by a pulverizer machine installed at Ramnagar's Jain Industries.

After 4–5 years, Surajmal turned his attention to packaging and introduced Mehndi packets of 40 gm, 100 gm, 200 gm, 400 gm, and 1000 gm. As before, Surajmal bought the packets from Ahmedabad. With the knowledge that customers prefer good-quality products as well as good packaging, Surajmal ensured that the packaging was attractive. Surajmal had identified that there was a growing trend among people to dye their hair with Mehndi. To cater to this segment, he started production of attractively packaged herbal Mehndi with additional ingredients such as Shikakai, Bhringaraj, and Brahmi.

As per Surajmal Mutha, Ganapati Chap Mehndi has a market share of 80%. He heartily credits this success to the profound contribution of his brothers, Subhash, Vinod, and Vijay. In the near future, you can expect to see some more products of brand 'Ganapati' such as turmeric powder, incense sticks, and balm. Ganapati has established itself as a leading brand name for premium products. The brand name, 'Ganapati', was actually suggested by Jagdish Guru, who is a close friend of the Mutha family. The Mutha family looks confidently poised to expand their business further.

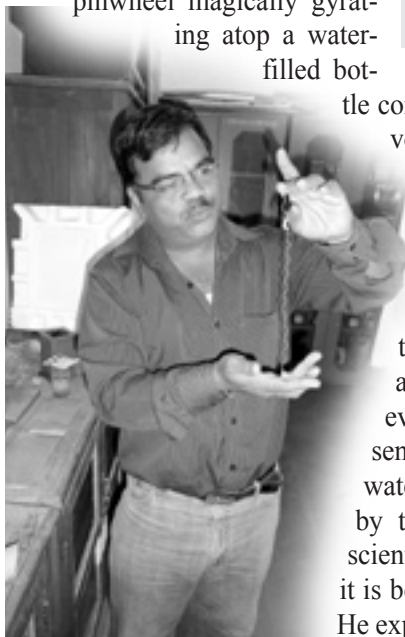
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Surajmal Mutha

Ganapati Mehndi, Madan Plaza, Near Alankar Talkies, Jalna



On the third floor of Jalna's CTMK Gujarati School is the school's science lab where many science projects are on display. While many of the school's students have created the projects placed near the lab's entrance, there is another strange yet amazing contraption made of distinctly familiar objects on the table of the school's lab assistant, Sanjay Tikariya. On closer inspection, you see a wire-stemmed, upward-facing pinwheel magically gyrating atop a water-filled bot-



tle complemented by a swirling water vortex whose tail end barely lashes at a couple of sunken, wooden marbles. A small rectangular piece of wood has been attached to the lower end of the wire immersed in the water. Inside the bottle is actually an emulsion, which is evident from the blue-dyed kerosene that struggles to stay above the water while being frantically stirred by the vortex. If the experiment's scientific principles are still unclear, it is best to approach Sanjay Tikariya. He explains, 'What you see before you

Sanjay Tikariya

Sanjay Tikariya is unlike the typical lab assistants who lackadaisically follow their work routine and keep watching the time. He has surpassed the bounds of his job description to take up the mantle of a science educator. His creativity speaks for itself through his projects that have helped foster scientific curiosity among children as well as adults.

are four projects based on scientific principles. The first experiment involves the water and kerosene emulsion. Because the density of kerosene is less than that of water, the kerosene floats to the top. In the second experiment is the spinning pinwheel. The ceiling fan increases the airflow thereby rotating the pinwheel. In the third experiment, the pinwheel's rotation causes the wooden piece to act like a stirrer, and the resulting vortex makes the pinwheel rotate more rapidly. The fourth experiment involves the wooden marbles. When water replaces the air in the pores of the marbles, they sink to the bottom having attained a density greater than water and kerosene. With a motley collection of disposable or ordinary objects, Sanjay has created a fun-filled yet educationally valuable resource that can help any child to remember the four experiments for a lifetime.

Every person who works in an educational institution such as a school has an important role to play. While the progress of the school's students greatly depends on their teachers' teaching skills, work integrity, and ability to bond with the students, the teacher's subordinates too can actively contribute to the teaching process. A person aware of this fact is Sanjay Tikariya, who has set very high standards even in his ordinary role of a lab assistant. His name truly deserves a place in the annals of education.

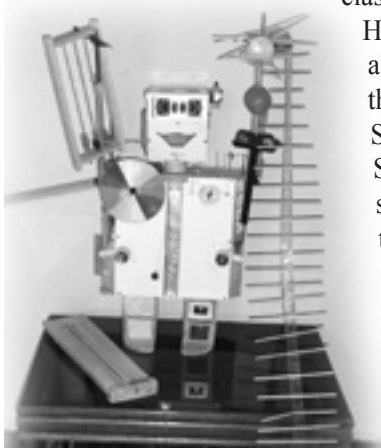
Sanjay was born on 19 December 1967 in Jalna. His father was then a headmaster of CTMK School. In 1984, Sanjay passed his class 10 exams. Sanjay was an average student, but he was an industrious person. After matriculation, he set up a small Kirana store in his home. In 1987, a family crisis had forced the Tikariyas to move to Chikli. In 1991, they returned to Jalna. This was the most challenging period for the Tikariyas. In 1992, Sanjay applied for the position of a lab assistant at CTMK School. After attending the interview and duly following the recruitment process, Sanjay got the job. Thereafter, Sanjay took the exams as a private candidate and obtained a degree in BA and MA.

Sanjay did not draw much attention while he worked as a lab assistant from 1992–2006. However, during the academic year of 2006–07, his life took a new turn. His achievements were highly appreciated, and his work received countrywide recognition. The science faculty presented their science projects at the annual science

exhibition. For the first time, lab assistants were given a chance to present their science projects in the 2006 science exhibition. Sanjay participated in the science exhibition and gave a demonstration of his projects titled 'Majhi Chotishi Prayogshala' (My Mini-laboratory) for which he was awarded the first prize. After receiving this news, the chief officer of Jalna's Zilla Parishad, Dr Nipun Vinayak immediately wrote a congratulatory letter to Sanjay and expressed his interest to view Sanjay's projects. Sanjay responded to Dr Nipun's request and showed him the projects at his Zilla Parishad office. Thoroughly impressed with Sanjay's wonderful projects, Dr Nipun promptly organised a training programme for all science teachers and issued an ordinance that all schools should set up a model laboratory similar to the one set up by Sanjay. None other than lab assistant Sanjay Tikariya was supposed to train the teachers! This was a thrilling experience for Sanjay. Soon, Sanjay became the most talked-about person in Jalna City for his achievements.

Sanjay's portable mini-lab was actually a compact kit consisting of apparatuses and materials to set up hundred different science projects. The most striking feature of this kit was it consisted of everyday, throwaway household objects and did not use anything expensive. Sanjay's inventiveness can be judged from one of his experiences. The school's science teacher, Shri Vidyasagar once instructed Sanjay to arrange the separation funnel experiment. Sanjay inadvertently broke the funnel. He walked over to Shri Vidyasagar's class to inform him about the mishap.

However, before Sanjay could utter a word, Shri Vidyasagar assumed that Sanjay had set up the apparatus. Sanjay did not want to disappoint Shri Vidyasagar and left without saying a word. While he sat on the school's staircase, he thought over the problem. Soon, he came up with an idea. Without wasting more time, he rushed towards the laboratory and rummaged the facility until he found an old saline container. He shaped a funnel



from the container by carefully cutting it and arranged the project. Shri Vidyasagar managed to demonstrate the experiment with an effective, albeit crude, apparatus. From this episode, Sanjay came up with the novel idea of a 'Khatpat Peti' – a utility box that contained many different objects and resources that students could use for creating their own science projects. For this unique initiative, Sanjay gives the credit to Shri Vidyasagar who inspired him.

Sanjay tells that anyone can create interesting science projects on shoestring budgets. This had always been the basic premise for all his projects. Winning the first prize at Yavatmal's science exhibition greatly boosted his confidence. After revealing the secrets of his lab to the teachers of Jalna District at the behest of Dr Nipun, Sanjay was invited to Satara to conduct his lab workshop for nearly 1200 teachers! There he met Bharat Jagtap, who was fascinated by Sanjay's ideas. Shri Jagtap advised Sanjay to meet Pune's NCERT director Shri Anil Bedge. After Sanjay arrived at Pune's NCERT for his scheduled appointment with Shri Bedge, he managed to impress Shri Bedge with his ideas to such an extent that their two-minute meeting stretched for more than two hours. Shri Bedge straight away called Aurangabad's deputy director Laxmikant Pandey and immediately handed over the appointment letter for an 'Expert Guide' to Sanjay. Accordingly, he was invited as an expert guide for a teacher-training programme organized by NCERT. Thereafter, on Sundays, he imparted free training to teachers by traveling to nearly twenty-six districts of Maharashtra.

In the following year, Sanjay displayed his science projects at Akkalkuwa's science exhibition and won the second prize. In 2009, Sanjay got the rare honour of conducting training at Mumbai's Homi Bhabha National Institute that is affiliated with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre. Sanjay was also given the opportunity to attend an international seminar at Singapore by the secretary of CASTME (Commonwealth Association of Science, Technology, and Mathematics Educators) Dr Agarkar. This seven-day Singapore tour, which kicked off on 16 November 2010, was granted to Sanjay for his contribution to the academic field.

Sanjay often experimented and came up with fresh ideas and presented his new projects at various exhibitions. At Parbhani's science

fair, he presented one of his most innovative creations—the ‘Prayog Manav’. In this robotic kit, he compiled all the necessary apparatuses and material to set up 200 different geography-related projects! The unique feature of this kit was that it included the audio recordings of the procedures for all the projects, which could be played at the touch of a button. The recordings could accurately guide children to set up the projects on their own. Another of his creations is the ‘Jadooee Ganiti Fala’ (Magic Maths Board) – a small box kit that cleared all the mathematical concepts from class 1 to class 4. Sanjay has created this activity-oriented educational kit based on his deep understanding of child psychology.

Sanjay’s innovativeness is not limited simply to competition-related projects. He has also set up several interesting projects in the school’s lab. In an airtight container, he and some students had planted a small sapling, which has grown and survived without air or water over the past four months. Tiny insects have made the jar their home. His other science project includes filtered water mixed with a drop of gutter water, which is now full of algae. This is the result of many stages of an organic cycle. Although Sanjay does not have in-depth scientific knowledge about it, this project is very relevant for students to study. There is also a real human skull in the school’s lab. The school’s speciality is that it allows students to enter the lab during recess after taking permission from their teachers. Sanjay expresses his heartfelt gratitude to the co-operation received from the school’s administration for all his endeavours. Sanjay unfailingly mentions the great confidence that the school’s administration has shown in him. In fact, he was given the responsibility to finalize the lab’s interior design and setup.

The students here regularly perform new experiments. They have complete access to the lab. The projects, models, drawings, and charts developed by the students are visibly displayed. Some fundamental science projects are permanently displayed so that teachers can promptly demonstrate them to the students. Sanjay Tikariya’s efforts and his commitment to work are praiseworthy. More information of this prodigy and his projects can be found on his website.

In the near future, Sanjay plans to set up a Tikariya Science Vi-

sion Centre (TSV). Sanjay plans to install many exhibits, which will cover all scientific concepts, at his proposed TSV Centre. Krishi Vigyan Kendra's Shri Vijayanna Borade has allocated a two-acre plot at Kharpudi for Sanjay's TSV Centre. Sanjay also has the solid support of Shri Sunil Raithata for his ambitious project. Nearly 300 people have extended their co-operation to Sanjay for his project. Once Sanjay's dream project is realized, it will be the epitome of Sanjay's contribution to the academic world and inevitably, a major source of pride for Jalna!

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Sanjay Tikariya

CTMK Gujarati School, Bus Stand Rows, Jalna



Intending

to witness the archaeological marvels of Ajanta and Ellora, an ambitious youth from Chhatrigarh stepped in Jalna City. He was completely broke, but he managed to find a partner-cum-investor to start a business. He made a small beginning by selling loose tea to the shops and hotels by cycling his way from the train station to the bus depot. He always cherished a dream that someday he would make it big. He worked hard, applied all his knowledge and skills, and seized every available opportunity to realize his dreams. Today, nearly four decades later, Rameshbhai Chotabhai Patel, fondly referred to as Bhaishree, runs his own tea company. Each day, 30,000 kg of Bhaishree's tea makes its way to the market. With a huge customer base, Bhaishree's tea has emerged as one of the leading brands of tea.

Rameshbhai was born on 12 October 1950 in Bochasan, a sparsely populated village located in Anand District

Rameshbhai Patel

People often tend to believe that successful businesspersons are born overnight because most of them hail from affluent backgrounds. However, success is more than an outcome of fate or coincidence. The following is a myth-buster story of an individual who faced many hardships, yet he turned the tables on his impoverished life with steely determination. The vast business empire he has created is bound to amaze anyone. His inspiring story strongly suggests that 'Destinies are made'!



of Gujarat. The boy's father, Chotabhai Patel, was a poor subsistence farmer. The farm's yield barely supported the family's basic needs. The poverty-stricken Patel family suffered many hardships. Hoping to provide better education for his son, Chotabhai entrusted him to the care of his sister who lived 15 kms far from Bochasan in Nargaon Village. Rameshbhai stayed with his aunt and attended a local school in Nargaon. In light of his family's economic adversity, Ramesh had to discontinue his studies after matriculation. Moreover, his parents thought it was hardly appropriate to burden Ramesh's aunt further. The year was 1965. Rameshbhai now started to search for a job. Ramesh had a chance discussion with one of his fellow villagers who worked at a Calcutta-based tea company. He assured Ramesh that he could land a job in Calcutta. Ramesh accompanied the villager to Calcutta. The villager introduced Ramesh to his employer who was a tea merchant. The merchant liked the lively lad. He decided to employ Ramesh and explained, 'Your job would be preparing tea, serving it to visitors, and washing and arranging the utensils in the pantry.' In return for Ramesh's services, the merchant promised him two meals per day and a place to sleep! For the fifteen months Ramesh worked at the merchant's company, he experienced the joys of two hearty meals each day. At times, Ramesh also had to do the merchant's laundry.

The merchant's clients who bought his tea included traders. Among them was Jayantibhai Patel of Bilaspur's Assam Team Company. Jayantibhai took a liking to a young and smart Ramesh. He offered Rameshbhai a job with an annual payment of 600 rupees that amounted to a monthly payment of 50 rupees. He also promised Ramesh an annual raise of 100 rupees. In those times, wages were discussed on a per annum basis. By the end of 1967, Ramesh quit his job and arrived at Bilaspur in Chattisgarh to work at Jayantibhai's teashop, which was close to a railway station. In the nearly seven years Ramesh worked at Jayintibhai's teashop, he had become well versed in the ins and outs of the tea business. Railway employees were among the teashop's regular customers, and it was obvious for a sociable Rameshbhai to be acquainted with train drivers, guards, and ticket collectors. This group, during their gossiping over tea, offered Ramesh a free trip with them to Tirupati to which he agreed.

It was mid-1974. After the group reached the holy city of Tirupati, they offered their prayers. While returning, they decided to go on a sightseeing trip to the Ajanta and Ellora Caves, and so they got down at Jalna. While they walked towards the bus depot past the then sparsely populated streets of the city, Ramesh was visually surveying the market. Like the focused Arjuna, who saw only the fish's eye during the swayamvara, Rameshbhai keenly observed that the roadside teashops, tea stalls, hotels, and kirana stores stocked a narrow range of tea brands such as Lipton and Brooke Bond. The brand of loose tea popular in Bilaspur and Calcutta was nowhere to be seen. Ramesh saw a great opportunity — a potential market for tea business.

Setting his sights on Jalna's potential market for tea business, a determined Ramesh returned to Bilaspur. It was time to make the most of his years of experience in the tea business. However, Rameshbhai was short of capital. He needed some prospective investor. He discussed his business plans with his friend Kiranbhai Patel and managed to convince him to fund the business. After making their initial purchase, they arrived in Jalna as complete strangers. They reached the address of the only person they knew — a lady from their village of Bocharan, Jasodaben, who was married to a Jalnaite. This was the house of Jalna's Jayantibhai Patel. During the duo's two-day stay, Jayantibhai helped them find a suitable accommodation. They decided to stay in a rented room of 'Madan Nivas' building, which was close to the railway station.

Rameshbhai decided to purchase tea from a tea merchant in Jalgaon, who was a relative of his former employer, Jayantibhai Patel. Ramesh and Kiran soon discovered that their direct selling approach was not working with the shopkeepers who had been stocking tried and tested brands of tea since long. They employed a new strategy. Early morning, they went around distributing sample packets of



tea to the shopkeepers and requested them to buy their tea if they liked it. In the evening, they again approached the shopkeepers who would be pleased with the flavour of tea and preferred to buy their tea, which was less expensive than the existing brands. In this manner, the duo managed to get their tea business off the ground. As news of their tea began to spread in the market, their customer base started increasing. To meet the steadily rising demand for their tea, they had to travel to Jalgaon twice a week to buy tea.

The loosely sold wholesale tea is different from the final product sold to customers. One of the most important processes in the production of tea is blending. A single variety of tea rarely offers the perfect balance of flavour, aroma, body, colour, etc. This can be managed by tea blending. It involves mixing different varieties and grades of tea in just the right proportions to create a well-balanced blend of tea, which has all desirable characteristics. Rameshbhai's mastery of tea blending ensured that the tea was flavoursome and it thus became popular. Rameshbhai got some respite in the afternoons from his busy morning routine of selling tea. He constructively used this spare time to develop local acquaintances. He would either help the rickshaw drivers to help calculate their earnings or help someone to write a letter. The business was expanding. After nearly two years, at the end of 1976, Ramesh bought a bicycle. With the help of a hired porter for carrying heavy loads, he rode on his bicycle to supply packets of tea. In the evening, he would revisit his customers to collect the money. Minus the overheads, Rameshbhai made a small profit. Moreover, the cost of his tea was less than that of the branded tea by 5–6 rupees. In those times, this was a significant price difference, which also proved to be a strong selling point for Ramesh's tea.

For a monthly rent of 110 rupees, Rameshbhai started a retail outlet in the place opposite to the Panchavati Hotel where Annapurna Snacks Centre is presently located. As usual, he went around selling tea packets in the morning, and after mid-noon managed his outlet for the rest of the day. He hired an assistant, Shabbir-miyan. People who tried Ramesh's inexpensive yet high-quality tea became his regular customers. The tea became popularly known as 'Rameshbhai ki chai'! With the increase in customer base, Rameshbhai

achieved business stability. The markets outside Jalna City now beckoned him. After he deputed his 'partner' as the in-charge of the outlet, he started exploring the markets of other cities. He traveled to Ranjani, Ner, and Sevli on Mondays, to Gevrai on Tuesdays, to Partur on Wednesdays, to Ambad on Thursdays, to Badnapur on Fridays, and to Pachod on Saturdays. Wherever he went, he adopted the same selling strategy that was successful in Jalna. On Sundays, he stayed in Jalna and sold the tea placed on a bed laid down in the market! He later employed Mohan, Kashinath, and Laxmikant, who were his valuable companions during his struggling years.

Rameshbhai was married in 1972. However, he traveled alone to try his luck while leaving his wife behind at his hometown. As the business expanded, Rameshbhai sensed the shortage of manpower. Rameshbhai called his fellow villagers, Umeshbhai, Virendrabhai, Janakbhai, and Navinbhai to assist him. To accommodate his new colleagues, he moved to the four rented rooms of Bankar Mansion near the Pani Gateway. Rameshbhai's colleagues occupied the two rooms on the ground floor, whereas he and his wife occupied the two rooms above. Rameshbhai's wife cooked food for everybody and also did everyone's laundry. Rameshbhai started a second retail outlet in Dana Bazaar.

While his reliable colleagues looked after his two outlets, he travelled elsewhere and explored other markets to promote his business. During his travels, he increased his business connections by reaching out to village-based shopkeepers, and tea-sellers who agreed to stock his tea. He then focussed his attention on weekly markets where he again practiced his successful tea-on-bed selling strategy. More and more customers started buying his flavoursome tea and its demand increased. Rameshbhai remembered his Calcutta-based employer, A. K. Patel to whom he felt deeply indebted and occasionally sent letters. Rameshbhai figured that buying tea from Calcutta would be more economical and so he contacted Shri A. K. Patel. Shri A. K. Patel was delighted to do business with Rameshbhai. Business terms were finalised which involved the penalty of interest charges if timely payment is not made upon delivery of goods. To expand his business further, he appointed distributors in many villages. He supplied them the tea and collected the payments

from them on his next visit. He replaced the distributors who sank or embezzled his money with new ones. He stuck to the practice of appointing one distributor per village.

By 1990, after nearly twelve years, Rameshbhai had expanded his business as far as Nanded, Latur, Beed, and Aurangabad. This was when he decided to develop a brand name for his tea. Televisions had begun to make inroads into the rural homes and were the most influential mediums in those times. Capitalizing on the mass appeal of the lead character, Vikram, of a then famous serial, 'Vikram Aur Betaal', on the only existing Doordarshan Channel, Rameshbhai decided to name his tea as 'Vikram Tea'.

For the next five years, from 1990 to 1995, Rameshbhai tried to streamline his distribution system instead of focussing on business expansion. Until now, he had appointed only business-needy and honest candidates, but it was equally necessary to discipline them. While some distributors were unreasonably demanding and stocking more tea than was sold, some others did not pay on time. Rameshbhai brought into effect strict company policies, which included regulating the supply as per the sales and stopping the supply of new stock to distributors who fail to make payments in a fixed time limit of thirty days. This helped improve employee and distributor accountability, thereby mitigating any financial risk.

He conducted another unique trial during this period. In addition to the regular tea packets of 250 gm, 500 gm, and one kg, he introduced affordable tea sachets priced at 50 paisa and one rupee. For this, he purchased an automatic sachet-packaging machine. He started an independent packaging unit on an 8000 sq. ft. area in Nathbaba Galli, but by 1995–96, even this unit could not meet the production targets. Therefore, Rameshbhai purchased a 10,000 sq. ft. plot, opposite to the Datta Temple, in the nearby Devamurti Village where he started an automatic packaging plant. This new plant had machines designed to handle packaging for both variable quantities of tea. After 7–8 years, in 2005, faced with the lack of adequate space, Rameshbhai decided to shift the packaging operations to a large unit set up at Borkhedi. The fully automatic machines had a packing range of 250–1000 gm.

Over the years, the company had introduced seven different

brands of tea in the market. In the regular category, Vikram is among the company's best-selling brands followed by Lion, Titli, Rupa, and Surabhi. The company has also introduced two premium brands in the market named Vikram Gold and Titli Premium. Rameshbhai has built a huge and loyal customer base. In fact, some customers have been buying his tea over the past 35 years. Each day the company does a business of nearly 30,000 kg of tea.

However, the road to success is never easy and Rameshbhai had to face many hardships. After 2003, he handed over the reins of business to his son Bhaveshbhai. In light of his decision to bequeath his business to his son and preparing for retirement at just 60 years of age, he was questioned. 'We often see that even decrepit old persons don't relinquish their business to their children. How did you make such a decision?' The reply he gave is something all fathers should take note of. He said, 'I no longer treat Bhaveshbhai as my son. I consider him as my friend, and in that sense, I have entrusted my business to him.'

After 2003, Bhaveshbhai spread his wings to get completely involved in managing the tea business. The business group has diversified its interests into nine different areas. The group's name has been named as Bhaishree by compounding the friendly title of 'Bhai' and honorific title of 'Shree'. It symbolises the respect and affection that Bhaveshbhai and all associated dealers have shown for Rameshbhai thereby conferring on him the title of Bhaishree.

Bhaveshbhai took the decision of pursuing business opportunities in fields related to food, clothing, and housing. In 2005, he set up Trinity Snacks Pvt Ltd at Aurangabad, which has a monthly production of 80 tons. These products are sold under the brand name of Umang. The Laxmi Cotspin Ginning Mill, started in 2007–08, is the result of his joint undertaking with Rajuri Steels Pvt Ltd. Along with a group of industrialists and academicians, in 2007–08, collaborating with some London-based and American universities, he established the Lotus Business School in Pune, which imparts management education. After the acquisition of the 14-year old financial firm, JK Securities, the Bhaishree Group has stepped into the brokerage business. With Bhaishree Ventures, the group has forayed into Aurangabad's real estate industry. In 2009, the group established Parvati

Solvent Pvt Ltd for the mass production of fodder from soya beans. The year 2009 also witnessed the establishing of Bhaishree Associates & Developers in Borsad, which is the taluka to Rameshbhai's hometown of Bochasan. A big complex is currently being constructed at Borsad to set up Bhaishree Medical & Research Foundation. In 2008, the group also purchased the 15-year old packaging company, Colour Flakes Limited, based in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. In Jalgaon, at the end of 2010, the company has laid the foundation for Bhaishree Foods Pvt Ltd for the production of ready-to-cook food products including Khandesh's most famous snack, the Nagli papad. The group has also set up the wind-power project under the banner of Gujarat Tea Traders Pvt Ltd in Satara area. With Softech Global Solutions, the group endeavours to provide software-development training to deserving and needy students.

While focussing on business advancement, Rameshbhai has never turned a blind eye towards the welfare and development of others. Even his long-time employees who once carried out the most ordinary tasks are today holding high-ranking positions. Rameshbhai values certain business principles more than he values his life and one of them is offering quality products to customers worth their money. While extoling the benefits of dedication towards work, he says, 'Always dream big and commit yourself totally to realise those



dreams. You will definitely succeed.' He adds, 'I have never spoken to anyone in an overbearing manner, and neither argued nor quarrelled with anyone. I have even admitted to mistakes that I never committed. I have accomplished so much because I was pliant and maintained my humility at all times.'

Rameshbhai presently oversees the purchase of raw material and the factory's business. Feeling indebted to his motherland, he has taken up many social causes. Since the past five years, he has been organizing mass marriage functions, which have till date helped 300 couples to tie the knot. He has enabled 400 children to get medical treatment at Udaipur's Narayan Seva Sanstha by paying for their complete medical expenses as well as travelling expenses. He sincerely endeavours to make good use of his money. He has set up an educational institute for underprivileged children in Bochasan.

One of Rameshbhai's essential contributions is addressing Jalna's acute water problem. Jalna gets its water from Ghanewadi Lake, which was built in the pre-independence era, but the water supply was largely inadequate. The large build-up of sludge amassed in the lake over the years has been hampering the city's water supply. During summers, water is supplied to waterless villages and areas by water tankers. Last year, Rameshbhai and his son, Bhaveshbhai, witnessed a heartrending scene nearby a water tanker of a heavily pregnant woman making her way with two big buckets of water through a careless crowd. Pouring his heart out to Bhaveshbhai, Rameshbhai said, 'The child within her womb is a dream cherished by her household. If, God forbid, the child gets shoved by anyone in the crowd, then a great misfortune will befall the family.' Taking stock of the situation, Rameshbhai took the initiative to resolve the water crisis. The solution was the removal of sludge that had accumulated in Ghanewadi Lake. He apprised his relatives and acquaintances about his new undertaking, and the very next day, in the morning, everyone reached the Ghanewadi lakeside to assess the situation. After some preliminary discussion, the sludge-removal work was immediately kicked off. Shri Sunil Goyal and Shri Sunil Raithata too volunteered to assist in the undertaking. In the summer of 2010, nearly 40,000 truckloads of sludge were removed from the lake. Rameshbhai's grand and noble initiative became the cause of a great

furore among Jalna's political circles and was fiercely opposed by narrow-minded bigots. Notwithstanding the opposition, both father and son supervised the work under the scorching sun. Farmers were offered the sludge for free. Despite the great deal of work accomplished, only two feet-deep of sludge was removed. The work was continued in full swing in 2011 and completed. Rameshbhai wishes to continue this undertaking for the next two years to increase the lake's capacity. The many similar initiatives he has undertaken over the years would require a complete book!

This is 'Bhaishree'... a man whose belief that he is greatly indebted to the land of his birth and in order to redeem himself of this debt has benevolently made great contributions to society.

Rameshbhai Patel

Bhaishree Group, Sindhi Bazaar, New Jalna, Jalna

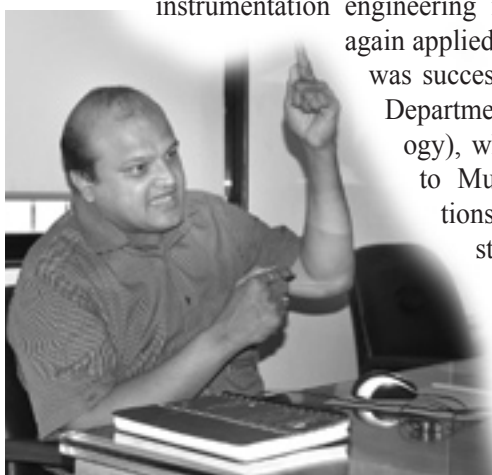


I clearly remember my first day at UDCT in Mumbai. The director of UDCT, Shri M. M. Sharma, said in his address to all students, 'You have gained admission to this Institute, but not everyone is so fortunate. You are one out of a million. Therefore, you must never forget that the responsibility of a million people rests on your shoulders.' Ashish was visibly moved when he was sharing his experiences of UDCT. He considers himself to be very fortunate to gain admission to UDCT. He recalls how he failed to get admitted to UDCT, although he was the first on its wait list. After he pursued

Ashish Mantri

Ashish knew that there can be no achievement without goals on his first day at UDCT. He aspired to be an industrialist and create jobs for one million people. The project of processing cotton-seeds was a monumental challenge, yet he solved it with steely determination.

It has been awarded the Mega Project Status by Government of Maharashtra. The following is the story of this pioneer who has immersed himself in the world of chemicals.



instrumentation engineering in Pune for a year, he again applied to UDCT. This time, he was successful. UDCT (University Department of Chemical Technology), which was once affiliated to Mumbai University, functions as an autonomous institute. It is now known as Institute of Chemical Technology. It is one of India's premier institutes and is ranked seventh in the world. The graduates of this

institute are not merely bookworms, but they have a great vision in life.

Ashish got his chemical engineering degree from UDCT in 1997. He progressed towards achieving specific aims in life. This transformation in his character was brought about by his father. Ashish was in class seven when he decided to make some money by selling candy, biscuits, and fire crackers during Diwali. After his father came home that evening, he saw what Ashish was up to. He was extremely angry at Ashish. He distributed all the things, which Ashish had bought to sell, among the neighbours. He lashed out at Ashish and said, 'Never ever do such business again. You are meant to manage industries, not run shops.' This proved to be a turning point in Ashish's life. He was just thirteen when he faced his father's ire, but it made him fiercely ambitious. His father was the owner of an oil mill. He wanted Ashish to be a manager of a production business.

Ashish was born on 3 March 1975 in his grandparental home of Shrirampur. He attended St Mary High School in Jalna. He was an average student, but after his father taught him to think big, he started taking his studies seriously. He matriculated in 1990. He majored in science from JES College in Jalna. Determined to achieve his dream goal of starting a chemical industry, he decided to pursue a chemical engineering degree from UDCT. Although he had scored 99% in PCM and was first on the wait list, he did not gain admission to UDCT. Short of options, he got admitted to a government college in Pune to pursue instrumentation engineering knowing well that it was hardly his field of interest.

A year passed by, yet he did not lose hope. He again applied to UDCT. His mother often reassured him that he will be granted admission to UDCT sooner or later. Ashish saw his dream come true when he gained admission to UDCT. On his first day in UDCT, he heard the address given by the director of UDCT, Shri M. M. Sharma, which helped him in setting his goal. He started work towards it with a tremendous spirit. He knew the importance of capital in starting an industry. The technology-process aspect was only 30% important, whereas finance was 70% important. He followed the advice of Shri Ramkishanji Mundada, who once said to him, 'You

cannot rely on academic knowledge alone. You also need to read other things...' He cultivated the habit of reading dailies such as The Economic Times, Businessline, and Business Standard, starting from his first year at UDCT. He made a sincere effort to read them from the first page until the end, although he understood very little of what he read. A year and a half later, he started to get a grasp of the business language. For the sake of his reading habit, he had to sacrifice some of his study time. Therefore, he had to contend with first class instead of a distinction, which he did not mind.

In 1997, he obtained a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering. The four years he stayed in Mumbai to pursue his engineering studies proved to be the formative years of his life. The hectic city life taught him the importance of managing time and being organized. He now had many options before him: pursue management studies to complement his engineering degree, go abroad to pursue higher studies, land a job. He was in favour of starting his own business, but getting the requisite experience was his first priority. He got job offers from two top-notch companies, Britannia and Ranbaxy. He joined Ranbaxy in Chandigarh. During his year and a half stint in Ranbaxy, he ran the 'Recovery from Waste' project whereby he saved the company six crore rupees. He got a promotion and a pay rise, yet he was not satisfied. He thought that if he could help Ranbaxy to save six crore rupees, then he could definitely create his own profitable business. He quit Ranbaxy in 1999 and returned to Jalna to start his company. He remembered the guru-mantra he had got at UDCT: 'Focus your energies where your family can support you. Strong blood ties will supplement your business.' His father, who had been running an oil mill in Jalna for 16 years, and his mother were delighted to see him back. They invested a lion's share of their life savings in his dream project!

He built an oil refinery, Gita Refinery Pvt. Ltd., with his parent's savings and some money acquired through loan. The price of oil kept plummeting between 1999 to 2001 to such an extent that it



became difficult to recover even the production costs. When Ashish discovered that he had incurred huge losses, his heart sank. He decided to give up on his long-held ambition to run a business. He called his professor to inform him of his decision to work at UDCT for which he would get a monthly salary of 20,000 rupees. He was about to join UDCT after a few days. However, he deferred his decision after he met Shrirampur's famed palmist, Kantilalji Bhandari, at a relative's marriage. He advised Ashish to wait for six months. In this period, Ashish investigated the reasons behind his loss. He discovered that he had failed to balance the purchase of raw material with the sale of his products. The homework Ashish did over the next three months helped him not only to recover the loss but also to make profits. He then joined forces with his younger brother, Atul, who boosted his confidence. Ashish says, 'Children should be taught Technical Analysis in college. It is impossible to know where your business is heading without knowing its ins and outs. How will a business succeed without proper directions?'

He invested his money along with Paresh Runwal in the brokerage firm, Adinath. The firm did good business. Ashish's strategy behind investing his money in the firm was to divide the risk factor. The initial business catastrophe he had to face had aroused his fears concerning the oil business. His brother, Sanjay Mantri, was involved in setting up an ingot plant with Nilesh Steel and Alloys. Ashish acted as a 'family promoter' by investing some capital in Nilesh Steel and Alloys. The plant started production after 4–5 months.

Keeping in mind the losses he had incurred in the oil business, Ashish adopted a backward integration plan to increase cost savings. He used the same strategy when he embarked on the project of soya bean processing along with his younger brother. The Bhakti Extraction Plant finally took shape in 2004. The plant not only produced soya bean oil, but it also produced a by-product which could be used as protein-rich animal feed. By mid-2006, all projects initiated by Ashish were running smoothly. He was also getting good returns on his investments in Adinath and Nilesh Steel and Alloys. The idea of starting another business was making him restless.

In 2007, he attended a discourse by a professor of UDCT, Shri

Pandit, at Amul Dairy in Anand, Gujarat. The main focus of this discourse was the growing deficiency of protein in humans. The brainstorming sessions which followed gave Ashish a new direction. It paved the way for his new project.

The discourse provided very interesting insights into modern nutritional deficiencies. An average human normally requires 70 gm of protein each day, whereas the protein intake of an Indian is just 25–30 gm per day. This affects a person's strength and vigour negatively. In the past, a person could easily carry a 100 kg sack; a person from a successive generation could carry a 50 kg sack; today, one finds it difficult to carry even 20–25 kg of weight. Thus, the physical ability of subsequent generations has diminished with time. One can get 23% of protein from lentils, 12% of protein from wheat, and 6% of protein from rice, whereas a person can get nearly 35% protein from a non-vegetarian diet. Furthermore, in view of rising food prices, it was important to find affordable alternatives.

Similar is the case with animals. Israel's geographical conditions are more or less like India, yet its milk yield per cow is 50 litres. India is far behind other nations in milk production, although it has the largest livestock population. Even the milch animals in India suffer from protein deficiency. Milk is a rich source of protein, but the per-capita milk production in India is very low.

Ashish thought deeply about the problem. He found that the humble soya bean, which has 55% of protein, was the answer to the problem of protein deficiency. He set up Bhakti Extraction Plant for processing soya bean to produce 'human grade protein'. He received substantial help from his younger brother in this project. The Flash Desolventizing system in the plant uses a special technology to separate the protein. Here, soya bean cakes, soya bean granules, and soya bean flour are produced. This project was initiated in September 2009. In addition to the aforementioned products, he also discovered a new product known as 'I Dal', which is short for Indian Dal. It is an artificial lentil produced from soya bean flour and wheat flour. Over the last couple of years, the price of lentils has skyrocketed and their vitamin content has decreased. The artificially created lentil tastes and appears like real lentil. Compared with natural lentils, they have more nutritional value. Naandi Foundation in Andhra

Pradesh has found it to be fit for consumption. Ashish is getting orders for the artificial lentil from Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu. This plant, which has a production capacity of 100 tonnes per day, will be started under the name 'Ruchi Soya'.

Thus, the outcome of a discussion at Amul was a project that could solve the problem of human protein deficiency. Efforts were also being made to address the deficiency of protein in milch animals. It was a widely known fact that cotton-seeds were a rich source of protein for animals. There was a good market for cotton-seed meals. At the end of 2007, Ashish decided to process the cotton-seeds to produce high-quality feed for animals.

After he initiated the project, he discovered the challenges of developing the required technology. Other countries, including America and Germany were not ready to give their technology. A similar project was undertaken in India in 1988, but it failed. As more and more problems began to arise, the more determined Ashish became. The project ran the risk of a powerful explosion if the reactions occurring during production could not be controlled. Ashish had a useful trait. Whenever he came up with a new idea, he discussed it with every individual he met. Such discussions often gave him some useful lead. Similar was the case when he was trying to deal with the cotton-seed meal project. He found out that the person who could help him develop the technology was Shri D. A. Prasad, the vice president of Ashok Leyland. Ashish tried hard to meet up with him. He was finally able to put forward the proposal of his project before Shri Prasad in a meeting held on 14 April 2008 in Chennai. He invited Shri Prasad to Jalna. Shri Prasad refused to visit Jalna, but he assured Ashish that he would help him in establishing a pilot plant. Thus, Ashish's project got off the ground.

The technicalities of this experiment need to be clearly understood. Cotton-seeds contain toxic compounds such as gossypol and a red pigment, which are termed as impurity profiles. The cotton-seeds release these compounds when they are heated during the extraction process. The biggest challenge is to control them. Therefore, nobody in India undertook such a venture. The latter part of the process was relatively easy. However, if these profiles are not controlled in time, then the quality of the animal feed is badly

affected. In such a case, large-scale chemical processes have to be implemented, which involves the extensive use of water to remove the chemicals. The process is controlled by using liquid and gaseous hexane. Failure to control the process using the ‘Vapour Pressure Control Program’ could result in a huge explosion in the plant. It was an extremely risky project, yet Ashish successfully solved the challenges that came with it.

After the tests were conducted, it was time to set up the project. Ashish’s father agreed to give him nearly 50% of the capital required for the project. He also shared certain business principles with Ashish. The estimated cost of the project was 25 crore rupees. His father said to him, ‘For a project, one should invest half of the capital required and arrange the other half through a loan. If the project fails, the bank can recover the loan by selling the land and machinery. At least, no one will come knocking at our door!’ Entrepreneurs of Jalna, Shri D. B. Soni and Shri Kachrulala Patni, who had great confidence in Ashish, were also ready to invest in his project. The American and German companies agreed to supply their technology without any performance guarantees. The project was kick-started in September 2008. Pieces of equipment were acquired from China, Thailand, America, and Germany. The plant was started under the name Abhay Cotex Pvt. Ltd. It was ready for conducting tests in September 2009.

Ashish invited Shri Prasad to Jalna. He was in touch with Shri Prasad for a year and a half. He felt it was important that the project should be started under the guidance of Shri Prasad. Shri Prasad obliged him by arriving in Jalna. He applied his knowledge and expertise to carry out the operations in the plant. He was happy to join Abhay Cotex. By the time the plant became fully operational, the cost of the project had run into 40 crore rupees. However, it was a necessary expenditure. If such projects are carried out countrywide, then the nation will save nearly 9 crore rupees each year!

It took six months to regulate the process. Ashish found it to be a worthwhile project from many standpoints. One of its advantages was that nearly five times the quantity of water could be saved because the production was carried out using a single-stage process. The other benefit was that the use of electricity and steam was

minimized. Thirdly, high-quality oil was produced. More oil could be extracted by this process. Moreover, the project was 100% pollution-free. Lastly, the natural amino acid protein (bypass protein) present in the cotton-seeds is preserved because of the single-stage extraction process.

After setting up this complex project, Ashish took a preventive measure. Knowing full well that the success of his project would prompt many companies to jump on the bandwagon, he filed three project-related process patents and a product patent. At ACPL, firstly, the short fine fibres that cling to the cotton seeds are removed. These are known as lint. It has a good demand in China. The next part of the process is de-hulling in which the outer covering (hull) of the seeds is removed. These have a good demand for the production of organic fertilizers. After the oil gets separated, the meal is produced and a high-quality, protein-rich cotton DOC is obtained. Exploiting the full profit potential by managing the risks of the production process was a crowning achievement of Ashish. This time he took the precaution of implementing backward integration beforehand. He set up a new company, Vrishabh Cotton, to ensure the adequate and timely procurement of cotton-seeds.

Two such projects are under way in Dhule and Yavatmal. The Dhule-based project will be finished by November 2011, and the Yavatmal-based project will be ready by June 2012. Anand Partani is at the helm of these projects. The effectiveness of the technology prompted a European investor to buy a record number of shares from ACPL. This has helped to raise the capital for the two new projects. The Government acknowledged Ashish's groundbreaking work on cotton-seeds and awarded him the Young Achiever Award on 11 December 2010.

Although he runs a highly complex industry, the aspects of which are not easily understood, he lives by some very basic principles. He says that hard work is always commendable and fruitful. Students should have a thirst for knowledge. He believes that a great character is forged by extensive reading. He gives importance to firmness of decision. In his view, one should thoroughly think over a matter before taking a decision. He considers trustworthy people to be more important than machines or money. It is his firm belief

that knowledge of the technical aspects is essential to run a business effectively.

Ashish has a great belief in Indian traditions and Yoga. With emphasis on character-building of students, he has set up an English-medium CBSE School, Shri Shri Vidyamandir, along with his family and friends, including D. B. Soni, Nitin Bagdi, Purshottam Rathi, Ashish Bhala, and Sheetal Bhala. The school offers quality education at a reasonable fee and has a holistic approach to teaching.

On the personal front, he has the company of his parents, brothers, and his knowledgeable wife, Mona Mantri. Ashish says, 'It is impossible for a single person to give time to the family, community, and business. The person who is truly successful is the one who can dedicate fully to one's profession or business as well as work for the community, while the person's better half takes care of the family.' He specifically mentions that his wife has made an invaluable contribution to his success!

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Ashish Omprakash Mantri

Abhay Cotex, 31, Jaggery Market, Old Mondha, Jalna

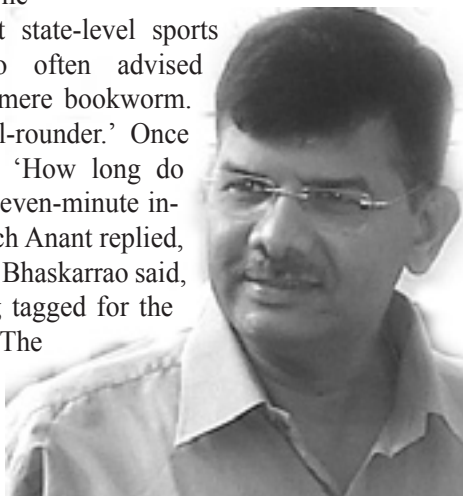


Anant

Pan-dare was born into an academic and industrious household. His father, Bhaskarrao Pandare, was a teacher at Jalna's Multipurpose High School and his mother, Nilima Pandare, taught at the Navyug High School. Anant attended the M. S. Jain High School. His teachers knew him as the son of Multipurpose's teacher, Shri Bhaskarrao Pandare, who was a respected figure. Thus, everyone expected a lot from Anant. As an inseparable member of the school's Kho-Kho team, he represented his school at state-level sports competitions. Bhaskarrao often advised Anant, 'Don't become a mere bookworm. You must become an all-rounder.' Once Bhaskarrao asked Anant, 'How long do you remain not out for a seven-minute inning of Kho-Kho?' to which Anant replied, 'For two to three minutes.' Bhaskarrao said, 'You should avoid getting tagged for the total seven-minute inning. The competing team should, in fact, completely give up the thought of chasing you. Don't ever get

Dr. Anant Pandare

Absolute willpower and the upbeat attitude can help one conquer insurmountable obstacles and help accomplish most difficult of tasks. These are the motivating words of Dr. Anant Pandare. Presumably, his never-give-up attitude had been forged by the teachings of his father who encouraged him to play Kho-Kho without ever getting out. He has extended this attitude to his life without ever surrendering in the most complicated of situations. The following is an inspiring story of an extraordinary individual.



out...' His father's motivational words took root in his mind.

Anant was also positively influenced by his teachers. One of his teachers, Shri Jaiswal, never digressed during his lectures. Nor did he ever get annoyed. This taught Anant to be calm and composed. From one of his other teachers, Shri Joshi, whose eloquent speaking was reminiscent of the great orators like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pramod Mahajan, Anant picked up the art of communication. From his private Maths' tutor, Shri Pathak, who taught multiple methods of solving an equation, Anant developed the approach of finding different solutions to tackle everyday problems and challenges posed in life.

In his class 10 board exams, he fell short of a distinction by one mark. As for class 11, it was a 'take it easy year', when he dedicated more time for extracurricular activities including sports, leadership, and speeches. By the end of class 11's academic year, word from the college reached Anant's father. 'Your son is going astray. While he has barely managed to pass his class 11 exams, the same may not be the case in class 12, so kindly pay attention.' After calling Anant, Shri Bhaskarao spoke to him at great length about sports, studies, and his journey ahead and lastly added, 'Chamatkar Shiyaya Namaskar Nasto! (Respect cannot exist without miracles!)' These words were forever ingrained in Anant's mind. Thereafter, for his next academic year, Anant concentrated only on his studies. He woke up as early as 4 o'clock in the morning to study and burnt the midnight oil. He tells, 'Because I continuously sat for long hours to study, boils had formed on my rear end. My mother would stack some folded sheets on my chair to ease my discomfort.' While he studied intensively, he intentionally underperformed in his exams, including his preliminary exam to avoid being overconfident about his final exam. However, he took his tuition exams seriously.

Anant recalls the day when the results of his class 12 board exams were declared. The college vice-principal, Shri Kendre, visited the Pandares in the morning and told, 'Anant has topped his college.' Although confident that he had excelled in his exams, he went to college to ascertain the truth. There was a big crowd at the college. Many professors did not recognise Anant except for one professor who pushed everyone aside to bring Anant forward. The

professor exclaimed, 'Hey, this is our college hero. Let him come forward...' The professor's special acclamation reminded Anant of his father's words – 'Chamatkar Shivaya Namaskar Nasto!' He kept up his impressive academic performance for his next four years at Aurangabad's Government Medical College where he also fell in love with Seema. Their love affair had gradually blossomed when they started accompanying each other to the Government Eye Hospital situated on Aamkhas Ground as part of their study program.

Anant had been attending the RSS's Shakhnas at his father's behest since his schooldays. He vividly describes the camp attended at Ulkanagari during his schooldays. The area was uninhabited and had a panoramic view of undulating hills and a brook passing through them. Shri Jayant Abhyankar, the camp's instructor, made quite an impression on Anant. Although he woke up at 3 o'clock in the morning and slept at midnight, there was not a hint of weariness on his face. He wore well-ironed shorts, behaved impeccably, spoke intelligibly, and conducted himself with utmost discipline. He stressed on the importance of working extra hard to achieve worthwhile goals. All in all, he positively influenced Anant. Anant's long-term association with the Sangh and Vidyarthi Parishad developed his personality.

After getting his medical degree in 1986, he studied for a Diploma in Orthopaedics from a surgeon in Pune. A year and a half later, he realised that the medical institute simply did not have the legal permission. After his recent marriage, securing a job had become his main priority. He landed himself a govt. job in Konkan. However, Anant soon felt discomfited after witnessing fellow doctors indulging in black marketing with the connivance of superiors. When he came to know about a new hospital set up by the RSS in Aurangabad, he submitted his resignation, but his superiors, intent on troubling him, rejected it. Anant made use of legal provisions to hand over the charge and was relieved from his job. All this happened in 1988–89. Before quitting his job, Anant informed his decision through Nana Navle, in response to which he received a letter from Dr Narendra Kulkarni. The heartfelt letter gave Anant the gritty determination to quit his job, and he soon left for Aurangabad.

Anant was clear about his job expectations from the start. When

he was first assigned the responsibility to set up the Sant Gadge-Baba Arogya Kendra, he spoke his mind. 'While I am totally ready to take on the work, I do not intend to part with my medical career. I wish to perform substantially for the institution...' Everyone treated his words as a representative feeling. On 6 February 1990, he joined the Dr Hegdewar Hospital, which was established by the Babasaheb Ambedkar Pratishthan.

On his first working day at the Hegdewar Hospital, he met Nana Navle, who was on the way out. Anant asked him, 'What work should I do?' Nana Navle replied, 'Meet Dr Narendra Kulkarni. Work in a manner such that you are present wherever required.' At first, he was delegated the responsibility of the Health Centre. Thereafter, he started assisting Dr Narendra Kulkarni. The work had just begun and there was very little to do. Dr Anant felt the need to develop the hospital. Everyone supported his view, but how could this happen? Anant's million-dollar question was — 'How will people assist if they never come to know about the wonderful work being done at the hospital?' News reached Anant that actor Sunil Dutt and Mumbai's Sheriff Nana Chudasama had planned to visit Aurangabad. Anant saw this as a window of opportunity. He left no stone unturned to get them to pay a visit to the hospital. They were thoroughly impressed after their visit. At the inauguration ceremony in Aurangabad that they had been invited to, they highly praised the hospital and announced their personal donations for it. In the next couple of days, many people paid a visit to the hospital. The donations collected by the hospital amounted to some thousands of rupees — a valuable sum in those times!

Following the full-scale communal riots triggered by the demolition of the Babri Mosque in 1992, a medical team from Aurangabad was dispatched to Ayodhya. Dr Anant Pandare who was about to join the team was made to stay back by Shri Prahalad Abhyankar in order to set up a blood bank. Anant was discontented, but Prahladji had the final word, and with good reason — everyone was in favour of Nana Navle's plan to set up a blood bank at the same time the hospital was being developed. Dr Manju Kulkarni was entrusted with the business affairs and Dr Anant was assigned the task of raising money. Setting up a blood bank was going to require 12–15

lakh rupees. An industrialist had agreed to donate 30 lakh rupees provided the blood bank was named after him. The hospital agreed to his condition, but when he demanded a letter from either Atalji or Advaniji, the hospital decided to turn down his donation. After overcoming a spate of challenges and hurdles, the hospital finally emerged and the blood bank was set up in an adjacent beautiful building. The second stage of the hospital's development is presently underway. The hospital is perhaps the largest health centre in Maharashtra developed from people's contribution and Dr Anant is an integral member of the committed team behind it. He proudly tells how the hospital project was realized because of the all-out effort made by all team members.

It is impossible to talk about Dr Pandare without mentioning the hospital because he made his cherished dream of a fully equipped hospital come true. Among the people who experienced his restlessness when he had started working in the old hospital building located in Bhagyanagar, Old Jalna, were Prahlad Abhyankar and Nana Navle, who were also his chief mentors. A big welfare project often requires hard-working and highly motivated youths who are ready to pour their heart and soul into it. They recognised Dr Pandare had the fire in his belly and provided him assurance and counsel in times of crisis.

After the blood bank was set up, Dr Pandare worked towards the next goal of a grand and fully equipped hospital – a vision shared equally by the hospital's doctors and members of the Sangh Parivar. However, the main challenge was fundraising – a concept presented by Dr Pandare and a task he enthusiastically undertook. The doctors working at the hospital were great masters of the medical field who



were wholly committed to their work. The hospital was the closest thing to the heart of Dr Narendra Kulkarni, who had dedicated almost his entire life to the hospital. Dr Bharat Deshmukh had stood up against the will of his parents to join the hospital. Jyotsna and Rajendra Kshirsagar had joined expecting just enough salary to pay for two square meals per day. As for Satish Kulkarni, he went to the extent of quitting a job with a monthly salary of 13,000 rupees to join the hospital on a starting salary of 3,250 rupees per month. The only basis of the professional competition that existed between them was of dedication to the goal. Although Dr Pandare was the newest member of the team, everyone showed full confidence in him and firmly stood by him whenever he undertook a new initiative. Dr Anant humbly mentions that this great team spirit drove him to contribute by working to the best of his abilities.

Aware that publicizing the hospitals goals and efforts was necessary to solicit assistance and funds from the people, Dr Anant started a fundraising campaign. Eminent personalities from Mumbai or Pune would then rarely visit Aurangabad. Dr Anant always kept a track of their arrival. Among the rarities to arrive at Aurangabad was Nani Palkhivala. Dr Anant went to great lengths to get him to the hospital. An impressed Shri Palkhivala before leaving had remarked, 'Only an RSS man can do this.' Acknowledgements from such celebrated and revered personalities were essential for building the hospital's positive image.



The hospital's relocation makes for another interesting story. When the hospital was to be sited on a larger land, Dr Pandare was making the rounds of many areas for an open tract of land only to discover sky-high property rates. The hospital hardly had the funds to make such a major purchase. It was conducting a sort of pilot exercise to estimate the funds required for such a purchase. This was also when (1994–95) the Shivsena-BJP alliance formed the govt. and Shri Mahadeorao Shivankar became the minister of Water

Resources. When he was on tour in Aurangabad, Dr Anant decided to talk with him about the hospital's relocation. He prepped himself for the meeting by carrying PR cards of twenty-five large tracts of open govt. land. When Mahadeorao paid a visit to the hospital, he said, 'How do you work in such a small place? Look for a bigger place. If needed, I am ready to help you out.' Dr Anant seized the opportunity to bring up the matter of a land in Garkheda lying unused since 32 years after the Ministry of Water Resources had requisitioned it. Dr Anant even handed him the related PR card. Shri Shivankar instantly expressed his approval and thus the foundation for a very big dream was laid. On that very evening, he summoned the related superintending engineers to the Subhedari Guest House and gave them instructions to develop a proposal and leave urgently for Mumbai. However, a govt. rule was getting in the way. The Ministry of Water Resources could not allocate the land outright to anyone. First, it has to deliver possession of the land to the govt. after which the cabinet's approval is required for the revenue dept. to hand over the possession via the district officers to the concerned. Thus, the matter was again pursued in an apt manner, but someone from the Ministry of Water Resources provoked the land's original owner. The owner, a Muslim gentleman, filed a complaint mentioning, 'If the Ministry of Water Resources has returned the land to the govt., then without giving it to anyone else it should be returned to me.' Dr Pandare met the owner and explained to him about the hospital project and its objectives. 'If the land is indeed allocated for such a noble purpose, I will take back my complaint', saying so the owner retracted his complaint!

It took nearly a year, the signatures of 532 officers, the approval of 35 out of 42 ministers, the help of 1032 people, and 175 trips to Mumbai by Dr Pandare for the hospital to acquire the 4 acres of land on 2 July 1996. Coincidentally, the same day was Dr Pandare's birthday and the land turned out to be his biggest birthday gift ever. On that very eventful day, while his family was eagerly waiting for him, the then minister Haribhau Bagade escorted Dr Pandare on the flight to Aurangabad and all the way to his residence in a beacon-fitted car! That day also became a most memorable day for Dr Pandare because of warm and touching, informal welcoming ceremony held in his honour at the Chikalthana airport where he was greeted by Dr

Ashwinikumar Tupkari, Dr Satish Kulkarni, and almost 150 members of the hospital's staff. This was a salute given by the entire team of Hegdewar Hospital. In fact, Haribhau had informed the hospital beforehand that he would be bringing Dr Pandare with him by flight. Haribhau knew that a welcoming ceremony had also been planned, yet he did not breathe a word about it to Dr Pandare throughout their entire journey! He too was delighted to give Dr Pandare a jolt of wonderful surprise. There was another interesting episode during that period. When acquiring the land from Land Revenue Dept. some dishonest officers demanded bribes. They were somehow convinced and proposal was pushed forward, but at one time, the process ground to a halt. The hospital's working committee held a meeting and passed a resolution available even today in a written form. It states, 'Even if a single rupee has to be given as bribe, then the land should not be accepted.' This decision instilled the power of ten elephants in Dr Pandare.

How the new hospital was constructed is another interesting story. After acquiring the land, the construction was held up for months due to lack of funds. A meeting was held at Shri Prahlad Abhyankar's residence, which was attended by the hospital's doctors, Mukund Bhogle, Anil Bhalerao, Madhukar Jadhav, and Chandrahas Chorekar. The doctors apprised everyone about the lack of financial resources responding to which Prahladjji said, 'If all these non-doctors believe that the hospital can be erected, then why to worry? At least let us make a start...' Without even a rupee in the sinking fund, the first stage of the '6 crore project got off the ground. The generous support extended by the people had surpassed the hospital's expectations. Rudrani's Vivek Deshpande and Arun Kulkarni provided 1,700 tractors of gravelly soil (murum) at their own expense to level the ground, which was uneven by a difference of 3.5 meters. The hospital only paid for the diesel required by the bulldozers. Tata Steel supplied the steel at a discount of 2000 rupees per ton. Century Ply provided the ply at 65% discount. The hospital had to pay only the excise duty for the top-grade Kota Stone. All the required paints were supplied free of charge courtesy of Nerolac. Milind Gupte, the Pune-based architect, offered his services gratis. Pune's Chandrakant Godse, the structural engineer supervising the work, who also happened to be the Sangh's volunteer asked only

for the petrol costs he incurred for trips between Pune and Aurangabad. Vitthal Deshmukh of Aurangabad offered free services as a CA. Architect Ajay Kulkarni did the landscaping work for absolutely nothing. Mukund Bhogle made his contribution as the Project Chief. Likewise, many others lent their helping hand, and the lofty dream took shape. In just one Saturday night, the hospital's possessions were shifted to the new premises in a well-planned manner. This was possible because of Garware's Anil Bhalerao, who had delegated the responsibility to his assistant. The hospital's equipment and facilities were set up on the very next day, and on Monday the hospital had even started its OPD in the new building. Almost 200 patients were registered each day at the old hospital. Everyone wondered whether patients would arrive at the new hospital. Their doubts were laid to rest when nearly 325 patients were registered.

There are many interesting episodes related to the hospital's construction, how challenges posed during its erection were overcome, fundraising, and Dr Pandare's contribution, but space constraints need to be considered. Even then, two things are worth mentioning. The first is the hospitals 'service attitude', which is becoming a subject of study for the most venerated IIM, Ahmedabad. During his fundraising trip to America in 1997–98, Dr Pandare came across some senior citizens working selflessly in a hospital. Later, he completely forgot about the matter. After the VRS was implemented by Bajaj, some people in their fifties met Dr Pandare and expressed their interest to work for the hospital. One such gentleman to approach Dr Pandare was LIC's Development Officer, Bhalchandra Kulkarni, who wished to work without being compensated. Fed up with his frequent follow-ups, Dr Pandare told him, 'Sit at the reception and check if the patients require any assistance.' After some days, Shri Kulkarni was found to be quite happy with his new assignment. This reminded Dr Pandare of his experience at the American hospital. Thus, a unique practice was introduced in India's medical field. Fifty 'humanists' like Shri Kulkarni are presently working at Hegdewar Hospital. They comfort the relatives of patients who undergo operation or help rural folks right from getting their case papers to offering them counsel or reassurance. The hospital does not give any compensation or special preference to these volunteers. Even if they need medical treatment, the hospital does not grant them

any concession, and they too have to stand in the queue for their case papers, but what is most notable is the fact that the volunteers insist that this is exactly how it should be.



The second episode is related to Dr Dadhich from Mumbai. After the repeated insistence of Adv. M. C. Agrawal, a well-wisher of the hospital from Mumbai, Dr Pandare went to meet Dr Dadhich. He was a radiologist from the older generation. After Dr Pandare spoke to him about the hospital, Dr Dadhich said, 'I have an old X-ray machine to offer. If it is working, you may use it.' As per the hospital's policy, used health care equipment was unacceptable, yet Dr Pandare fully respected Dr Dadhich's age and noble intentions and sent a supplier to check the machine. The supplier reported that the 35-year old machine was still in perfect working order, and the machine made its way to Hegdewar Hospital. After serving the hospital for a good eight years, the machine finally broke down and was unserviceable. Before it was sold as scrap, Dr Pandare, wrote a thank-you letter to Dr Dadhich for gifting an excellent machine to the hospital in which he also informed that it was now being sold as scrap. Responding to the specially written letter, Dr Dadhich's wife expressed her desire to help the hospital and invited Dr Pandare to Mumbai. However, Dr Pandare was so busy that he could not fulfil her request. A few days later, he again received a call from Mrs. Dadhich requesting him to come to Mumbai immediately. Even Nitin Deshmukh, who was with her, spoke to Dr Pandare on the phone. He said, 'Please come as soon as possible. Madam is presently in the ICU.' Knowing the seriousness



of the situation, Dr Pandare prepared to leave for Mumbai, but next morning he received the news from Dr Dadhich that his wife had passed away. Still, he requested Dr Pandare to come to Mumbai. When Dr Pandare met him, Dr Dadhich said, 'She was quite happy after receiving your letter. She wished to do something more for the hospital. Before the last day of my wife's Sraddha, her wish must be fulfilled...' He then kept a cheque of 32 lakh rupees in Dr Pandare's hands. Dr Pandare was overcome with emotions. Moved by the letter of gratitude from Dr Pandare, an incredibly kind-hearted Mrs. Dadhich had presented the precious Colour Doppler facility to the hospital. This was a tribute for the benevolent Dr Pandare, who had always fostered feelings of affection and goodwill towards others! His colleagues relieved him from his medical duties in 1996 so that he could effectively employ his PR skills and help the hospital flourish. This was exactly what Dr Pandare had previously expressed – 'I wish to perform substantially for the institution...'

To give an account of all such episodes would require an independent book. The hospital is developing rapidly. A new hospital named after 'Shri Guruji' of the RSS is being erected on the 5-acre land granted by the Bhonsala Military High School, Nasik. Dr Ashwinikumar Tupkari has dedicated himself for this task. Dr Pandare extends his co-operation whenever necessary. He informs that the hospital could be assigned the task of setting up a medical college in the near future. Dr. Pandare says, 'People are always eager to help. In fact, they were just waiting. The only thing required was revealing the task. When that happened, help came from every corner. People gave lavishly to the institution...!'

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Dr Anant Pandare

Hegdewar Hospital, Garkheda, Aurangabad



The Inspiring Question

Ravi

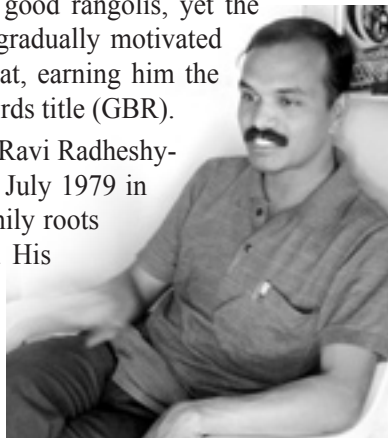
Konka an art teacher at Jalna's Shri M. S. Jain School was asked to judge the rangoli competition for the university organized youth festival of 2008 in Paradh. While judging the event, he was caught unaware by a curious girl who asked him, 'Sir, how can you judge this competition?' The gist of her argument was that the art of rangoli had been a women's forte since long and given that men were hardly familiar with the finer aspects of rangoli, they had no right to judge it. The competition ended and the judging was over, but Ravi could not take his mind off the girl's question. As a well-qualified teacher

of fine art, he could draw very good rangolis, yet the 'question' began to nag him. It gradually motivated him to pull off an impressive feat, earning him the prestigious Guinness World Records title (GBR).

The full name of this artist is Ravi Radheshyamji Konka. He was born on 31 July 1979 in a Padmashali household. His family roots are in Siddipet, Andhra Pradesh. His father, Radheshyamji Konka moved to Jalna in 1958 for a job. He earned the family livelihood as a handloom weaver. Powerlooms took over handlooms,

Ravi Konka

If you disagree with the saying 'Inspiration can be found anywhere' then there isn't a story more compelling than Jalna's very own Ravi Konka's. A question posed by an outspoken girl at a youth festival event turned out to be the inspirational quest for Ravi. It had driven him to unleash his creative potential and earn him a name in the highly esteemed Guinness Book of World Records. Then perhaps it also wouldn't be far-fetched to say 'Inspiration can be found in anything, even a mere question!'



but later the weaving industry came to a halt. Thereafter, the family made a living by rolling beedis. The welfare benefits given to bidi workers enabled Ravi to attend the Jain School in Jalna. After completing his higher secondary education in 2000, he took the Art Teacher diploma course at Ajanta College of Fine Arts. After getting a G.D. Art degree from Yashwant College of Fine Arts, Aurangabad, he began teaching as an art teacher in Jalna's Shri MS Jain English School. In 2000, during his college days, he received much kudos for his artistic work displayed in an art exhibition held at Chandigarh. In 2005–06, when he was pursuing his G.D. Art degree, he was nominated for a state award. Although no one in his family had ever entered an artistic profession, it was at a very early age that he developed an interest in art, which finally became his passion.

After the youth festival incident, his life took a new turn. Ravi resolved to achieve the record-breaking feat of making the largest rangoli. He sought the guidance of the tabla maestro of Jalna, Shri Prasad Choudhary, who held the Guinness World Record in 2003 for playing the tabla non-stop for forty-six

hours, and thus he made the auspicious beginning for his 'record' undertaking. On investigating, Ravi came to know that Dr Pranali Patidar from Dhule held the Guinness World Record title for creating the largest rangoli measuring 6000 square metres. It was a four-coloured rangoli depicting the map of India with the tri-coloured flag in the background. On enquiring, Ravi was informed by the authorities of GBR that he needed to make a rangoli at least a square metre



larger than 6000 square meters with more than four colours to create a world record.

For his rangoli, Ravi decided to create the image of Mahatma Gandhi on the foreground of the national flag. He drew his idea on a paper. He started searching for an expansive piece of land that could accommodate his record-breaking rangoli. His search finally ended at the police training grounds. A wall on one side of the ground and a building on its other side obstructed the winds making it an ideal spot for creating the rangoli. After finalising the place, Ravi sent his application to GWR. He was notified by GBR on 13 November 2009 that his application had been approved. The day fixed for the event was 30 January 2010, which was a full moon day when the moon would be closest to Earth and winds would blow gently thus making the conditions favourable for the event. Coincidentally, the day also marked the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The only important thing Ravi required was an estimated 20 tons (200 quintals) of rangoli powder!

Ravi had what it took to accomplish the feat, but he did not have the kind of money to buy 20 tons of rangoli powder. He struggled to raise the required amount. He met Shri Arun Agrawal of Kalika Steel who agreed to offer some financial assistance after asking him some questions like: ‘How did he get the idea to perform a record-breaking feat?’, ‘How did he estimate the amount of rangoli required?’ Ravi then tried to arrange for the remaining amount. Even Shri Kailash Gorantyal, a member of the Padmashali community, offered to help Ravi, yet more money was required. Ravi’s search for sponsors ended when Shri Arun Agrawal invited him by phone. He asked Ravi for his list of requirements and said, ‘Do not worry about the money. Carry on with your work and focus on your feat.’ On hearing this, Ravi was overcome with emotions and expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Shri Agrawal. By then, Ravi had only four days to prepare for the final event!

Rangoli powder from Rajasthan made its way towards Jalna. On reaching Jalna, the truck was unloaded. However, the supplier had delivered 20 tons of pure white rangoli powder whereas Ravi had specifically ordered rangoli powder in various colours! When enquired, the supplier flatly said that he sold only white rangoli

powder. Ravi found himself in a Catch-22 situation. With just days to go for the event, the only way out was colouring the rangoli powder. Trials to colour two sackfuls of rangoli powder were conducted. The results were satisfactory, but it was highly impossible to colour the remaining vast amount of rangoli powder in the time available. Finally, the production unit of Radhika Tiles bailed Ravi out of the problematic situation by suspending its work for three days to dedicate its entire mechanism for colouring the white rangoli powder. Even then, it was a very tight situation. The sacks of rangoli powder were being delivered from the unit one by one to the ground when the rangoli was being made.

Before the event, the fire brigade had sprayed the ground with water, rollers were used to level the ground, and slurry of cow dung was sprinkled over the ground. Lighting towers were installed on all sides of the ground. An independent three-phase light metre worth 18,000 rupees was installed. Sports coach Shri Brijesh Nayar, Shri Prashant Navgire, and Shri Deshpande helped to draw the outlines as per the artwork. The District Judge and District Collector helped by facilitating the ground for the event. Once the necessary permission from the zonal commissioner was obtained, all legal formalities were completed.

On the morning of January 30, after Ravi's parents performed the bhoomi-pujan ceremony, Ravi made an auspicious start. He had to continue making the rangoli for the next 72 hours during which time he could not leave the grounds even to answer the call of nature. Therefore, Ravi avoided eating anything other than occasionally drinking some glucose water and having some dry fruits. A team of doctors were also present as a standby. In a day and a half, Ravi's rangoli was equivalent in size to the record-holding rangoli. The jubilation among Ravi's supporters was clearly visible, but the real test lay ahead. Ravi's hand and legs were beginning to stiffen. Ravi found it very difficult to bend down. His blood pressure was lowering. He was in a very physically discomforting state. On February 1, everyone's help and his determination bore fruit as Ravi drew the last stroke of his rangoli and fell to the ground with tears rolling down his eyes! In the next three days, thousands of people flocked to the police training grounds to see Ravi's colossal masterpiece.

Ravi pulled off the world record-breaking feat with the support of Shri Arun Agrawal and Shri Kailash Gornatyal and many helpful individuals including a team of fifty members, who were present at the grounds to provide assistance. It was unaffordable to call the judges at GBR to Jalna so, as per the GBR guidelines, a report duly signed by chartered officers was submitted to GBR. After nearly eight months, Ravi received the certificate from GBR and again there was jubilation among his well-wishers. Ravi is now planning to make another world record by creating a railway engine from thermocol. He has already working on it and soon he will have another world record to his credit.

Assuming a woman uses a bowl of rangoli powder each day, she would use nearly a quintal of rangoli powder in her lifetime, whereas Ravi had used 200 quintals of rangoli powder!

The record-breaking rangoli was Ravi's 'answer' to the question asked by the girl at the youth festival – 'You may be making rangolis, but are you used to creating them as much as we (womenfolk) do?' Even today, Ravi is extremely grateful to the girl for indirectly providing him the inspiration and allowing him to discover his true inner potential!

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Ravi Konka

Shri MS Jain English School, Near Fulambrikar Drama Theatre,
Bus Stand Road, Jalna



Pramod

gave up his ambition of becoming an engineer. It was at the behest of his grandfather who wanted to see him as a doctor that he chose to pursue medical studies. He is now the Managing Director of Sperm Processor Private Ltd. (SPPL), a world-class Assisted Reproductive Technology solution provider. The company also extends its services in providing IUI-ready human semen banking services and comprehensive training solutions in reproductive technology.

The inability to bear children is neither a disease nor a cause of social disgrace. While discussing about controlling the birth rate, population explosion, etc., it is equally important to understand the system devised by nature for birth control. A new life does not come into being without the physical union

The Ingenious Doctor

Dr Pramod Bajaj

Almost every married couple cherishes the thought of parenting their own child. However, these dreams remain a distant reality for some. It is for such couples that Dr Bajaj gives a compelling reason to cheer. As the founder of Sperm Processor Pvt. Ltd. (SPPL), Dr Bajaj takes pride in providing reliable medical services for progeny. Moreover, his pioneering efforts in the field of Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) have been well acknowledged by an international medical fraternity. The following is the story of the man and his unique undertaking.



between a man and a woman. The production of sperms in males is a continuous process, whereas in females, the ovum is produced only at certain intervals, but sometimes these processes are hindered, and it becomes necessary to adopt scientific means. IUI (Intrauterine Insemination), IVF (In Vitro Fertilisation) and ICSI (Intracytoplasmic sperm injection) are some of the scientific methods of which IUI is the easiest and the most inexpensive solution. The first step of IUI is Sperm Processing. This involves isolation and ‘washing’ of active sperms, which are then deposited in the female’s uterus. Dr Bajaj has been working in the field of reproductive technology at SPPL in Aurangabad. SPPL provides an indigenously developed armamentarium of premium ART products. It also offers a sperm banking facility and supplies sperm.

Pramod Ramvilas Bajaj was born in Jalna on 13 February 1961. His ancestral roots are in Aantarvali Tembi, Ghansavangi District. Pramod’s father owned a commission shop in Jalna. At Dr Bajaj’s insistence, he closed down the shop in 2000. After matriculating from Rashtriya Hindi School and completing higher secondary education from JES College, he gained admission for Mechanical Engineering in Aurangabad’s Government College of Engineering in 1977. However, Pramod’s grandfather longed for Pramod to become a doctor. In the same year, considering the large number of aspirants who completed PUC and higher secondary education, the then state government under the leadership of Vasantdada Patil augmented 700 medical seats. Pramod gave up his engineering studies after six months when he gained admission to Aurangabad’s Medical College in December 1977. He got his MBBS degree in 1984, and he earned his MD degree in Microbiology in 1987.



On 27 February 1988, Dr Bajaj embarked on his career path by starting a Pathology Lab in Jalna. In 1990, he started a human sperm bank facility named Cryogenic India Pvt. Ltd. in Delhi with the support of an NRI woman and help of his colleague. Dr Bajaj went solo in 1997 by establishing Sperm Processor Pvt. Ltd. in Aurangabad.

There are millions of tiny sperms in the

semen, but this count has declined significantly according to WHO's (World Health Organization) report. As per its report of 1990, the sperm concentration was 123 million per ml, and it dropped down to 64 million per ml in 2000. The main reasons behind this have been pollution and stress. There have also been visible changes in women physiology. The average age for the menstrual period in females has come down from 15 years to 10–12 years. While the first ten years are favourable to procreation, most marriages do not take place at this age. Thus, the opportune time to procreate is wasted. The second phase is when most marriages take place, which is between 25–30 years of age. Scientifically, this is the mid-range for procreation. If the marriage takes place at a later age, then problems are likely to arise. On a global scale, this affects the birth rate. Male infertility has been mainly on the rise, and semen analysis is the only way to check it. Begetting progeny depends on the sperm count and motility. Checking sperm count and motility, preserving sperms, and making use of technology to provide sperms for conceiving a child is all part of Dr Bajaj's work. In fact, he has himself researched and developed many ART products.

He has developed the 'Sperm Meter' to analyse sperm concentration and motility. A semen sample can be precisely analysed in its 10 μm (micron) deep chamber under the microscope with the ability to focus on the sperms in a 1 μm X 1 μm square grid owing to the fine surface graticule of the product's glass cover. To understand the minuscule figures involved, the following conversions prove helpful: 1cm=10mm, 1mm=1000 μm , 10 μm =1/100 of a millimetre. The depth of 10 μm prevents an incorrect count that can occur from overlapping of sperms.

Dr Bajaj is the first person in India and second in the world to develop the manually operated Sperm Meter. Automatic and semi-automatic meters are very expensive. They cost anywhere from 10 to 40 lakh rupees and are less preferred worldwide. Manual meters are inexpensive and are widely used. In comparison to similar meters produced globally, Dr Bajaj's meter is quite inexpensive. Even the European Society has given its approval to this research. The product's other feature is that each meter has been assigned a unique number for the purpose of identification.

In the IUI technique, a catheter is used to collect and release the sperms near the ovum. Most catheters available in the market are generally made of only polypropylene material. Because the sperms stick inside the walls of such catheters, using them may not guarantee successful results. Keeping this in mind, Dr Bajaj has developed an effective IUI catheter with an internal tubing of special LDPE material, which prevents the sperms from sticking.

Donor insemination is of two types, fresh donor insemination and frozen donor insemination. As fresh donor insemination does not involve any incubation period, the necessary screening of diseases cannot be performed. This poses a great risk to the recipient. America and Europe have adopted stringent regulations for screening of diseases thereby encouraging frozen donor insemination. Regardless of the fact that there are no stringent regulations in India, Dr Bajaj is very serious when it comes to managing SPPL's semen bank. He adheres to strict guidelines and maintains complete transparency by cataloguing detailed records and photographs of donors. The record keeping begins right from issuing the gate pass to the prospective donor. A detailed record of the donor includes his blood group, height, bone structure, skin- eye- hair-colour, HIV, HbsAg, STD, etc.

SPPL's semen banking facility has state-of-the-art cryopreservation systems. The semen samples are preserved at -196 °C temperature in liquid nitrogen. The water used in the process is filtered by an ultra-pure water system. An aseptic cleanroom environment of the 'Class 100' benchmark is maintained to avoid contamination of the semen samples. This ensures pure air free of moisture and pollutants like dust, microbes, etc. A special air flow chamber maintains a particular temperature and can filter the air up to 0.22 µm. This cost of this facility runs into lakhs of rupees.

The most meticulous and critical aspect of Dr Bajaj's work is Semen Banking. His expertise was put to the test when he took the case of an elderly client from Punjab. He had lost his young son to an accident and desired to beget another child. When he lived in France, he had frozen his sperm in a local semen bank. He wanted Dr Bajaj to fetch it and perform the necessary procedure on his wife. Dr Bajaj used liquid nitrogen to bring the semen (liquid nitrogen

maintains temperatures at -196°C) to India. The couple finally got their test-tube baby by IVF!

By the year 2006, his research and technology reached twenty-two countries. In the field of ART, his company is among the select few to export their products. In 2005, his Sperm Meter received CE accreditation. He has launched an e-book titled 'Lab Andrology at Your Doorstep.' The CD covers all the important aspects of andrology (field of study related to male reproductive health) related treatments with complementing animations that clearly explain the practical processes and underlying theories. The CD also comes with a hard copy of the book. Judging by the response it has received worldwide, it may well be a one-of-its-kind project.

In 2007, Dr Bajaj took the next progressive leap by entering the field of livestock Artificial Insemination (AI). His research helped to resolve many issues pertaining to this field. Over the past two decades, the government laid emphasis on livestock AI; however, rural veterinarians lacked the necessary instruments to effectively perform the procedure. For instance, quality sperm is frozen at -196°C , and for performing AI, it is thawed (liquefied by gradually warming) until it nearly reaches the animal's body temperature of 37°C . There was no guarantee that the sperms' quality would be maintained using traditional means. To tackle this problem, Dr Bajaj invented a portable, battery-operated thawing machine that could precisely control the temperature named as Sperm Warmer. This product greatly increases the success rate of livestock AI. He has also created a special film to educate and train the people working in the field of livestock AI and animal husbandry.

Dr Bajaj is now deeply involved in the development of a computer-Assisted semen analyser. At a time when reproductive capacity has dropped worldwide, his inventions prove invaluable for assisting reproduction. After finishing this project by March 2011, he intends to devote himself for the creation of India's first private animal sperm bank. Unlike government-driven livestock AI where the history of the semen donor and health records are unknown, Dr Bajaj's animal sperm bank promises to provide all the details to the animal's owner. Dr Bajaj has always strived to find practical solutions to general issues concerning the common person.

To the young doctors working mainly in the field of research and development, Dr Bajaj says, 'Why be only limited to practice? Perform practical research alongside your practice.' He firmly believes that even if 1 per cent of the doctors take on his challenge, then there will be a paradigm shift in the health industry. In his experience, numerous opportunities are available to those who can convince others of their ideas, but there is a lack of inventive minds. He advises that one's primary goal should be becoming a millionaire in one's studies instead of becoming monetarily rich. He opines that one should strive for excellence in an area of specialization rather than be concerned about one's monthly earnings.

Dr Bajaj is unhappy with governmental decision-making processes. He complains that one has to wait for as long as two years to get ISI certification in India and businesspersons incur huge losses as a result, but the system is simply indifferent to their plight. He also informs that the ISO certification is a 'system certification' and is not meant for product quality. He recommends CE (Confirmation for European Standard) Certification to those who wish to sell their products in global markets. It takes just a month and a half to obtain the results for CE certification after submitting the product.

Dr Bajaj gives credit to three other people who helped him in his journey. One of them is his wife, Smt. Meena Bajaj who has matriculated, yet she competently handles the overall business at SPPL. Dr Bajaj says, 'While managing the developments on the technical front, the presence of my life partner greatly boosts my energy and enthusiasm. My wife has a lion's share in my success.' The other two persons are his brothers – Vinod Bajaj (Agricultural Engineer – M.Tech) and Sunil Bajaj (B.Tech) –who extended their valuable co-operation from time to time. Dr Bajaj's grandfather was the one to push him to pursue a medical career. Perhaps, he had the foresight that one day his grandson would achieve something remarkable in the field of medical science, and indeed, he has fulfilled his aspirations!

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Dr Pramodkumar Ramvilas Bajaj

Sperm Processor Pvt. Ltd., Welcome Nagar, Garkheda, Aurangabad



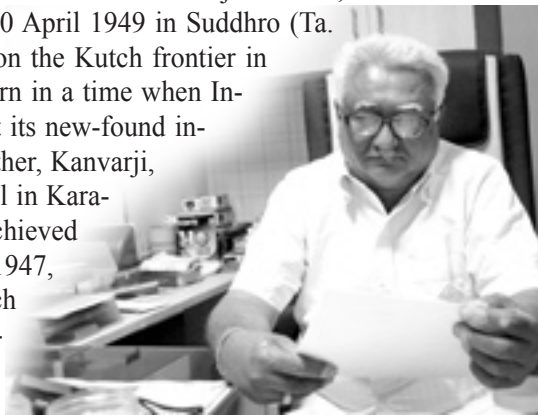
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The Creator of Dal Mills

A youngster, who matriculated in 1967, landed a job at an air-force base in Naliya, Gujarat. Two years later, he gave up the job and returned home to his parents in Maharashtra. He worked as a fitter for six years, 1969 through 1975, in a dal mill in Jalgaon. He arrived in Jalna in 1975. Twelve years later, in 1987, at the age of 38, he started his own factory. The dal mill machines manufactured at his production unit have been installed in many places in India and abroad. His company, Vishwakarma Enterprises, has grown by leaps and bounds and has established itself as a leading and reliable producer of dal mill machines.

Narottam Hansora
Narottamji matriculated in 1967. He moved from pillar to post in the course of his career. He started out small but was a big thinker. After he acquired considerable experience by working as a dal mill fitter, he harnessed his skills to manufacture dal mill machinery. His small startup, Vishwakarma Enterprises, has grown into a leading manufacturer of dal mill machinery with customers across India and abroad.

This is the story of Narottam Kanvarji Hansora, who was born on 30 April 1949 in Suddhro (Ta. Abdasa), which is on the Kutch frontier in Gujarat. He was born in a time when India was rejoicing at its new-found independence. His father, Kanvarji, worked in a dal mill in Karachi. After India achieved independence in 1947, he started to search for a job in Mumbai. He took a job as a fitter in a dal



mill in Mazgaon. In 1962, he gave up his job and arrived in Jalna. His family stayed in Gujarat till Narottam completed his education. After he matriculated in 1967 from Alfred High School, Bhuj, he got a job at an air-force base in Naliya. His mother, sister, and younger brother arrived in Jalna in 1969 to stay with his father. He moved from Naliya to Jalgaon, where he worked as a fitter in a dal mill. In 1975, he quit the dal mill and settled in Jalna. He was a very skilled dal mill fitter who enjoyed his job. Besides offering services as a dal mill fitter, he carried out electric motor winding work. He provided on-the-spot motor repair and rewinding services. After he had made significant progress, he wanted to develop his business. Determined to start his own company, he bought a plot in Jalna's industrial estate in 1984.

It is rightly said that God helps those who help themselves; Narottamji's life was transformed by four public-spirited individuals. Even today, he has immense respect for them. They are Shri Raghavendra Deshpande, the manager of MSFC; Shri Khadilkar, the director of MIDC, Aurangabad; Jayantbhai Ganatra of J. J. Plastics; and Kumar Deshpande. They helped him to invest 36,000 rupees in a plot in the industrial estate in Jalna. In 1987, he obtained a loan of 1,60,000 rupees to build his production unit. In those days, the complete dal mill machinery (pulse processing machinery) was made of wood. Apart from manufacturing wooden dal mill machinery, he also made wooden furniture. Gradually, the wooden dal mills were replaced by iron dal mills. Narottamji stopped making wooden furniture and concentrated only on developing his dal mill business. After 2002, steel dal mill machinery started to become popular. By then, the ban on using wood came into force; many customers complained about wooden devices and even bank security was not available on them. Moreover, it was more cost-effective and easy to manufacture equipment by using iron.

Narottamji sold only a few types of machinery in the beginning. Taking into account the needs of his customers, he gradually made appropriate modifications and developed a range of products. He started to manufacture dal mill machinery such as grader, emery roller, elevator, sailor, and conveyor. In the gram flour category, he manufactured pulverizers, centrifugers, and pneumatic dust collec-

tors. He also manufactured polishing products such as straight grader, fibre polisher, and leather polisher. His products were always in great demand. After dominating the market of Jalna, his products have reached the consumers in India and abroad.

Narottamji started out his career by offering on-the-spot services as a dal mill fitter. He is now the owner of a company, which specializes in manufacturing machinery. He has indeed come a long way in his career. All through his business-oriented career, he received the help from his brother, the late Jayantilal Hansora, who passed away in 2008. Narrotamji has two sons, Kiran and Chetan. They followed in his footsteps and are presently taking care the business. Kiran has acquired higher secondary education. He has finished a course from Udyojakta Vikas Kendra. He looks after the marketing division. Chetan too has obtained higher secondary education. In addition, he has also received computer training. He takes care of accounts, while Narottamji oversees the production department.

They have recently opened a new production unit called Sunrise Food Process. They have been able to achieve two things by starting this unit. Cleaning of pulses is one of the important processes in the dal mill industry. In the past, labourers were hired to clean the pulses, but now cleaning pulses and grains is a breeze at the cleaning unit set up by Narottamji. At the same time, he gives a practical demonstration of his machinery to customers who are interested in buying them. He is very particular about ensuring that all of his machines are user-friendly. As and when he came up with new ideas for improving his machinery, he has implemented those ideas, so that his customers get the best output from them.



Narrotamji has also carried out a unique experiment in the dal mill business. For new entrepreneurs, who are doubtful about the commercial viability of running

a dal mill business, Vishwakarma has introduced mini-dal mills, which are more affordable than regular dal mills. Over the past 4–5 years, he has sold nearly 60 mini-dal mills, which have proved to be a worthwhile investment for buyers. It has given good returns (2–4 lakh rupees per year) to unemployed people, who hail from rural areas. It has become the centre of attention because it is a low-cost investment option. Narottamji has also successfully developed a grinding mill for making tandoor flour.

Knowing perfectly well that success depends on the quality of the products, Narottamji and his family implemented strict quality control measures. Their main objective was to satisfy the customer's needs. They never compromised on buying the best equipment and raw material. Narottamji says he is proud that many, who have been his customers for nearly 20 years, continue to buy products from him and ask for his services even today.

In his business-oriented career, he has also had some touching experiences. Once, a beer bar owner, who was interested to start a dal mill business, came to him. The reason he gave touched Narottamji's heart. He said, 'I made a fortune by managing a beer bar for many years. Later, youngsters from 17–18 years of age started to frequent the bars and order for alcohol. Now, my conscience does not allow me to earn money at the expense of the next generation. Therefore, I was looking for a decent way to earn a living.'

Narottamji is a public-spirited man, who is always eager to help people. He says, 'Believe in destiny, but also carry out your actions (karma). I started out with just 22,000 rupees and left the rest to destiny; I am now living a life of success and fulfilment. There is simply no alternative to hard work!'

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Narottam Hansora

Vishwakarma Enterprises, A-9/8, MIDC, Jalna

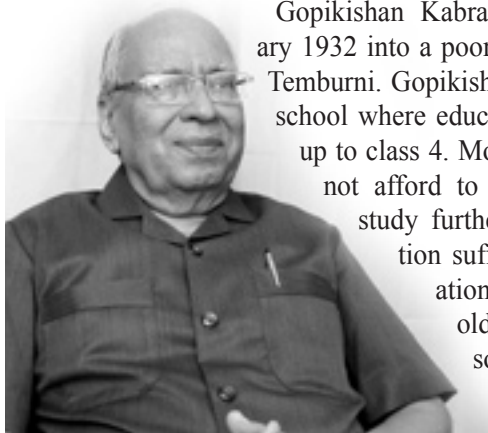


Gopikishan Kabra

Few people are out of the ordinary. Their legendary deeds speak volumes about them as they give a completely new meaning to the term 'achievement'.

Gopikishan Kabra, a Temburni village commoner, stepped into the outside world with an enterprising spirit and created a large-scale enterprise, which today is run by his sons. The story is about the prodigy.

After reading Gopikishanji's life story, one is reminded of Hellen Keller's famous quote, 'Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.' At the age of 45 years, Gopikishanji decided to go off the beaten track by quitting a high-paying job to start his own business. Against all odds, he succeeded in establishing his company, Kabson, in 1973. The company scaled new heights under his headship, and almost all of its products were unique in some way. After 1951, he settled in Hyderabad. He is now in his eighties and has completely devoted himself to philanthropic causes. As a person who takes special pride in displaying his Marwari lineage on his visiting card and who has the habit of jingling his coins, his accomplishments are quite remarkable.



Gopikishan Kabra was born on 1 January 1932 into a poor family in the village of Temburni. Gopikishanji attended the village school where education was provided only up to class 4. Moreover, his family could not afford to send him elsewhere to study further, and his early education suffered. This was his situation until he was 14 years old. On the other hand, the son of his affluent uncle studied abroad and was adored and admired by

Gopikishan's grandfather. Gopikishanji envied him not out of bitterness, but out of the desire to earn his grandfather's love. He made up his mind to study further at a school in Deulgaon-Raja, but failed the assessment conducted by the school's inspector. Gopikishanji could barely read or write because he had learned very little at the village school. A generous and kind schoolteacher offered to help Gopikishanji. The teacher and his wife taught Gopikishanji for the three months he stayed with them. Gopikishanji finally gained admission to the school. His determination to study further prompted his father to pay the school fees. That year, Gopikishanji stood first in the school!

He matriculated at the age of 19 in 1951. In those days, students had to plan for their careers right after matriculation. Gopikishanji wanted to become an engineer. He left for Pilani thinking to himself, 'I am a Marwari... Birla Seth Marwari. I will definitely gain admission to Pilani's Birla Institute of Technology!' Unable to afford BIT's upfront fee of 33%, he soon realized he was chasing an impossible dream. He returned homeward with a heavy heart. He decided to apply for admission to Hyderabad's Osmania University, which was then a preferred university for higher education for many students from Marathwada. However, the due date for admissions to Osmania University was over. He realized he had wasted time trying to gain admission to BITS. Gopikishanji and his father persuaded the University management to admit him. It was then that he caught the attention a secretary to the state government, who was at the college for some work. Impressed by Gopikishanji's forceful personality, he spoke in his favour to the University management and paved the way for his admission to Osmania University. It was 14 August 1951, a very successful and rewarding day in Gopikishan's life. Relating to his admission experience, Gopikishanji says, 'Difficulties bring out the best in us, and we are able to perform more forcefully.'

After attending the University classes, Gopikishanji took tuition to pay the University fees. This was his daily grind from day one at the University. Thus, braving adverse conditions, he completed his engineering degree in 1956. Soon after, he got two job offers—one was from a process-based company with a monthly salary of 250

rupees, and the other was from Allwyn Company with a monthly salary of Rs. 200. He had to make a choice between a well-paid job and a knowledge-based job. Although 50 rupees were a reasonable additional income in those times, Gopikishanji willingly took the job offer from Allwyn intending to apply his engineering knowledge. Thus, he joined as a trainee engineer in Allwyn in 1956.

During his twenty-year stint in Allwyn, he was hailed as the most diligent worker. He says, 'I was the first to arrive at the office in the early mornings. I worked late until 8 or 9 pm and had hardly seen the sunset from my house. My colleagues made fun of me, but knowing well that the knowledge and experience gained by working hard would help me in the future, I remained totally immersed in my work.'

The Allwyn Company built bus bodies, manufactured furniture, and sold imported refrigerators. The company had bought a refrigerator



plant, but it lay unused for long. In 1957, the company received a big order for ballot boxes. Making these boxes on a large-scale was a tedious and time-consuming job as it involved a large amount of welding. Gopikishanji managed to convince his seniors that by using the spot-welding machines previously imported for the refrigerators the order would be fulfilled on time. The management approved his plan and granted their permission to use the spot-welding machines. By the end of the third week, seven of the ten spot-welding machines had been employed to build the ballot boxes. By the end of a month, all the machines had been put to use and the order was fulfilled on time. Impressed by Gopikishanji's resourcefulness and quick thinking, the managers immediately promoted him to chief of the electrical department.

Gopikishanji's seniors valued him for his enquiring nature, inventiveness, and daringness. It was through his endeavours that Allwyn entered into an agreement with a Demark-based company for manufacturing compressors. Thus, equipped with its own compressor manufacturing capability, Allwyn's once unused refrigerator plant was converted to an operational refrigerator-manufacturing unit. Gopikishanji's efforts were always well-rewarded with a handsome raise. By 1970, he was earning a salary of a whopping 4000 rupees, which was at par with the salary of the then Chief Secretary of Andhra Pradesh. It was the highest salary he ever got at Allwyn because soon the State government took over the company! During



his career at Allwyn, he had made valuable contribution to the development of refrigerators, compressors, washing machines, hydraulic tipper, etc. To capitalize on his immense experience, he was inducted into Industrial Disaster Management Committee, Bureau of Indian Standards, various research and testing laboratories, and committees dealing with enterprise development. He was also an

advisor to various banks that offered loans to small- and medium-scale industries.

In 1973, at the age of 45, intending to start his own company, he bade farewell to Allwyn where he had worked for nearly twenty years. He had made a tough decision considering his age, yet he was willing to take the risk. After he quit Allwyn, he was left with 76,000 rupees, which he gave to his wife for managing the household expenses. To acquire capital for his factory, he applied to Andhra Pradesh Finance (APF) for a loan of 4.5 lakh rupees. Usually APF took three months or a year to approve a loan, whereas

Gopikishanji's loan was approved in a month. However, Gopikishanji had no collateral for the loan and failed to get it. A month later, at a party, Gopikishanji met an official in the State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), Shri Mathur. He spoke to SBH's Managing Director in behalf of Gopikishanji. Gopikishanji was called to the bank. After much deliberation about the rules and regulations, Shri Mathur and SBH's AGM, Shri Vaidya agreed to grant a collateral-free loan as 'bridge finance' to Gopikishanji on the condition that the loan is repaid before the end of the current fiscal year. Gopikishanji was worried about repaying the loan on time, but he took it after a little persuasion from Mr. Mathur. SBH issued cheques to the sellers for the machinery and equipment Gopikishanji ordered from them. Small-scale industrialists who were among his old acquaintances helped him to create the product samples for free. On 1 Jan 1977, Gopikishanji participated in the big industrial exhibition, which was held annually at Hyderabad. Among the various products displayed in his stall were a road tanker and gas filling plant. At the same time, he advertised his products by using promotional videos and the print medium. The reputation and confidence he had gained during his years of service at Allwyn generated the interest of many in his products and services, and he collected an advance of 17 lakh rupees – a cheque for 5 lakh rupees and 12 lakh rupees in cash. Because safekeeping such a huge amount was an onerous task, Gopikishanji returned 9 lakh rupees to the respective owners. He used the remaining 8 lakh rupees to repay the loan to SBH and the invested the rest in his business. It was the last time he ever needed a loan! The great amount of confidence he had gained of the society and the business world was by virtue of his immaculate behaviour.

Gopikishanji formed the company and named it Kabson. Kabson specialized in the production of household appliances such as cooking and water-heating appliances, lamps, etc. Determined to be the best, Kabson soon became the leading company to develop and manufacture LPG-based appliances indigenously. Kabson established a joint venture with Primus Company of Sweden and Lion Cubs Company of Britain. Its LPG product line included cylinders, valves, regulators, gas detection equipment, and alcohol analyzers.

With red-tapism reaching extremes in India, developing all these

products was not a cakewalk. As a man of principles, bribing was unacceptable to him and this often led to altercations between him and the senior officials; other times, he would be exasperated trying to make the officials listen to reason. Many a times he even fought legal battles to win justice. He never gave up his fight against the corrupt system until he succeeded. Heated discussions centred on him rattled the Andhra Pradesh Parliament. Because Gopikishanji did not grease the palms of some corrupt officials, they stooped to levelling allegations against his company. Soon, some ministers of the State Government and senior officials carried out an inspection of the company only to give it a clean chit. Gopikishanji says, 'One has to be upright even when doing business. Moral values help to become mentally strong. Uprightness is the greatest of all virtues. One can make remarkable progress only by uprightness alone. I withstood the pressures of false allegations and slander against my company because I drew my strength from uprightness.'

Gopichandji's employed conscientious individuals in his company intending to pave the way for their progress. He even gave jobs to half-educated candidates who were eager to work hard. Such was the confidence he had in them that although they were English-challenged, he often sent them on business trips to other countries, thus boosting their self-confidence. Initially, he provided refuge to many in his shed and assigned them work and gradually built up his own business. He raised their self-esteem. If their sons and grandsons ever come across Gopikishanji they greet him by touching his feet.

Gopikishanji also extended his help to his brothers and their families. He called his younger brother to Hyderabad in 1959 and provided him a job. He set up an independent business for his elder brother who arrived in Hyderabad in 1963. He helped them whenever required, and, behind the scenes, he instilled in their children a sense of pride for their fathers.

When his sons were old enough, he brought them together in the business. He was with them until they were well-versed in business, and as he had previously decided, he retired at the age of 65 years. Before his younger son's marriage, he distributed his wealth among his sons. He compelled them to live in separate homes. Having studied the psychology of women, Gopikishanji says, 'My wife was in

charge of all household affairs. After my elder son's marriage, my daughter-in-law took over her responsibilities. They got along well with each other, but when three women come together under one roof, the struggle for authority becomes severe. While the relations between everyone are still harmonious, it is best to separate and stay independently.' Only the younger son and his wife refused to live separately and after renovating the old home started living with Gopikishanji and his wife. However, Gopikishanji tells others that he stays with his son.

Gopikishanji's perception of life is very clear. He firmly believes in the maxim from the Bhagvad Gita that expectations are the root cause of grief. He asks, 'Why should we keep expectations? Why should I expect that the young members of the house should touch my feet or my sons should not spend money without seeking my permission? Why should I expect them to lead a simple lifestyle like I do? Would I come so far had I only done what my father expected from me?' He adds, 'Everyone is



different. Our only duty as parents is to make our children capable of taking their own decisions. It would be most inappropriate to interfere with their every decision.'

Today, Gopikishanji does not have any wealth to his name. He has passed on his business to his family members. He is presently conducting trials in magnetic therapy, which is beneficial particularly to the health of the elderly. He carries some notes in his pocket given by his wife only for her satisfaction.

His daily diet consists of not more than two meals per day. It was a habit he had adopted since he joined Allwyn. Back then, he used to take his lunch in the morning before leaving for office. Consider-

ing his small income, he avoided having tea or meals in the office canteen to save money and thus he grew accustomed to eating two meals per day. Even today, he does not consume tea! He has given his every payment to his wife who has managed all his money matters to this day. He says, 'In the conventional sense our family may not be a joint family, but it is definitely a closely-knit family.'

Gopikishanji has championed many social causes. He has contributed more than a crore rupees in charity for various welfare projects and activities. Seth Balam Kabra College of Law in Jalna, Smt. Jamunabai Balam Kabra School, and Samaj Mandir in Temburni have been built from his generous donations. He has also extended his support to many schools and hospitals in and around Hyderabad



abad city. A list of all his philanthropic pursuits will invariably be a very long one if created, but he deems it highly inappropriate. He

clarifies that he has extended his help purely for the sake of social welfare without expecting anything in return.

Gopichandji insists that one must change with the times. Why impose your own principles on others? Imposing personal beliefs only widens the generation gap because expectations are the root cause of unhappiness. Keep expectations away and your life will automatically improve is his happiness formula for all.

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Gopikishan Kabra

Kabson Machinery, Hyderabad



Some people are comfortable doing the same job for years on end. There is another group of people who switch jobs in order to find a more fulfilling career. Such geniuses believe in carving their own future. They work and live by their own unique principles. Nitin Kabra, the founder of Bhagyalaxmi, is one such person. Under the guidance of Krishnakumarji Goyal and Laxminarayan Aggrawal, Nitin Kabra along with Satish Aggrawal, Sunil Goyal, Vishal Aggrawal, and Pravin Goyal, has set up a large-scale steel enterprise.

Masters of Destiny

Nitin Kabra

Nitin Kabra knows how to use his money wisely and has a clear purpose behind making money. He has contempt for the arrogance of those who don't value or respect others after they become rich. He believes that one should work in the best interests of society. He teamed up with four like-minded friends and founded Bhagyalaxmi Group. This story gives an insight into the reasons which motivate him to make money.



N i -

tin's family roots are in Temburni. He was born on 17 April 1975 in his grandparental home in Pune. His father was a coal trader. Nitin completed his schooling in Rashtriya Hindi School, a Hindi medium school in Jalna. He was just an average student. He had a great fascination for automobiles; he often wondered how they worked and how

they were manufactured. He wished to pursue his interest in automobiles. Therefore, he decided to apply to a polytechnic after he matriculated in 1990. He gained admission to a polytechnic in Pune established by the Eklavya Education Society. His cousin from Ahmednagar, Shailesh Toshniwal, gained admission to the same polytechnic. He too pursued the same programme. They educated together, but Nitin became terribly upset because the medium of instruction was Marathi and the lessons were in English. Having attended a Hindi medium school, Nitin found it extremely difficult to cope with his studies. Despite these problems, he cultivated the habit of reading English newspapers. This improved his knowledge of business. Besides reading the news, he studied the balance sheets of various companies and drew inferences from them. After completing his diploma programme in three years, he applied to JNEC in Aurangabad where he gained direct entry to the second year of the degree programme. At JNEC, Nitin had an advantage over other students because the syllabus was hardly different from that of the diploma course. He soon transformed from an average student to a high scorer. He was so confident in his knowledge of the subject that he even taught third-year students. He maintained 100% attendance at college. The three persons at JNEC who were a major influence in his life Nitin were Prof. Tated, Prof. Pratap Borade, and Chiddesh Jain. Nitin admired Prof. Tated very much for his in-depth knowledge and excellent command over his voice. He is at a loss of words to describe how impressed he was with Prof. Borade. Chiddesh was Nitin's friend at JNEC. Chiddesh was a good-natured and amiable person. Although he came from an affluent family, he never behaved ostentatiously.

Nitin wanted to run his own business. He decided to do a job for the sake of professional experience. In the campus placement, the only interview he considered attending was the one conducted by auto major, Bajaj. He impressed the interviewers with his technical knowledge and his business knowledge, which he had gained by reading the Economic Times newspaper. He compared Bajaj's scooter base and motorcycle base and told them about the imminent challenges in motor base. He won the job. Nitin was offered a starting salary of 10,000 rupees, which was nearly fourfold of what his friends were earning.

Nitin barely had any idea about things back home in Jalna. It was only in 2011 he came to know that his family had been living a life full of hardships. As a solicitous parent, Nitin's father never told him about his condition. He did not even ask Nitin for help. Nitin like a dutiful son sent home part of his earnings. He was enjoying a good position and a handsome salary at Bajaj, yet he wanted to quit his job. In March 1997, he took a leave of eight months from Bajaj to prepare for an exam to go abroad. After he returned home, he was shocked to see the plight of his parents. His father's ice-factory business was not doing well. Nitin felt he had taken a wrong decision at a time when his family had no fixed source of income.

Nitin cancelled his plans to go abroad. He teamed up with some of his friends to open an automobile reconditioning shop in Jalna. It received a so-so response. To recover from financial instability, his father entered into a working partnership with Ramkishaji Mantri and Sanjay Mantri, who started a steel company, Nilesh Steel. After the company began its production, the shaft of a 600 HP motor broke. Nitin was soon called to Nilesh Steel. He mended the machine in just two days. Thereafter, the company sought Nitin's services whenever there was a machine breakdown. Shortly thereafter, Nitin's father met with an accident. At the insistence of Sanjay Mantri, Nitin started to work with Nilesh and thus began his tryst with the steel industry. This was a golden opportunity for Nitin that could change his future.

In 2001, the company's production rate reached 150 tonnes per day, which was 10 times its production rate in the previous year. It was Nitin who had put all his skills to the test to maximize the production rate. Even after maintaining this positive trend, the company made losses. No one could figure out the reason behind this. After studying the balance sheets, Nitin discovered that the raw material expenditure was translating into losses. He advised Sanjay Mantri to start the production of ingots. In 2002, the decision to erect a steel ingot plant was reached. Nitin was new to all this, but he was very eager to learn new things. On 8 December 2002, the ingot plant was realised with the help of Electrotherm's engineer, Sandeep Mahajan. Days after the plant started, the situation changed. The company was making profits. Everyone was surprised after they saw

the balance sheet of Jan–Feb 2003. The company had made record profits! However, Nitin was unhappy. He was not ready to sacrifice his ambitions for the sake of money. He quit Nilesch Steel on 28 February. Careerwise, he had no definite direction. His friends in the automobile reconditioning business were doing good business, but Nitin felt it highly inappropriate to rejoin them.

The three years of work experience in the steel industry proved to be invaluable to Nitin. On the basis of this experience, Nitin started to look for work. Even in this situation, he was against doing a job. He informed Sunil Kulkarni and Electrotherm's engineer, Sandeep Mahajan about his work requirements. They felt sorry for his situation, especially because he had been their close colleague at Nilesch Steel. Sunil Goyal knew an industrialist from Mumbai who was setting up a project in Nasik. At his insistence, the industrialist appointed Nitin as the project-in-charge. It was taking too long to set up the plant until Nitin arrived. In fact, the industrialist's expectations had fallen so low that he aimed to start production in eight months. Nitin implemented a unique work strategy and kick-started the production in just 35 days, leaving the industrialist impressed and amazed. It was on 6 April 2003 that Nitin started to work on the project and on 10 May 2003, he had set up a fully-operational plant! One of the strategies that Nitin implemented was that he assigned the work to the persons he trusted. Among them was the scrap dealer, Sunil Goyal!

Thereafter, the industrialist always took Nitin's advice at each step! One thing was certain that Nitin had worked as if the business was his own. As a result, the work was accomplished perfectly, and Nitin spoke and behaved at par with the industrialist. Nitin believed that neither salary nor position determine a person's worth, but it is determined by an individual's behaviour. The remuneration for his services was yet undecided. It was up to Nitin, who had worked more like a partner than an employee, to decide his remuneration. Shri Kulkarni stepped in to resolve the matter. He advised Nitin to take as much money in advance as he saw fit and reach a bilateral agreement over his remuneration after completing the work. However, such a situation never arose.

Nitin had worked for nearly twenty months in Nasik to set up the

plant, which was the first of its kind in India. Until then, such a plant existed only in Europe. Nitin admits that the necessity factor drove him to come up with the idea of the plant. His experience was based on the proverb ‘Necessity is the mother of invention’. The industrialist he helped was making crores of rupees from the business. He was planning to erect another plant in Raipur. Shri Sunil Goyal was interested to make an investment in this new project. Nitin arranged the meeting between Shri Goyal and the industrialist, but after he understood that the industrialist had an ulterior motive, he ensured they never get close to each other. He knew that Sunil would incur huge losses by entering into such a partnership.

Some days later, Sunil Goyal paid a visit to Nitin’s residence in Nasik. They usually met in the factory. He told Nitin his plans to start a project in Jalna. He persuaded Nitin to join him in his undertaking. He made it clear to Nitin that he would be his partner and not his employee. Sunil Goyal knew that Nitin would never settle for a job and would return to Jalna one day. Nitin knew that Sunil was interested in community service. They both had the same purpose behind making money. Together they would make a solid team. Nitin agreed to work with Sunil Goyal on the condition that they set up a billet manufacturing plant instead of an ingot manufacturing plant.

The difference between ingots and billets lies in their casting process. Ores with more than sixty percent iron content qualify as iron ores. Oxygen in the iron ore is removed by heating it, and we get sponge iron (The Mumbai-based Industrialist was interested in setting up such a project in Raipur). The sponge iron is further heated in an induction furnace to separate liquid ferrous material, which is cooled in special moulds to produce iron ingots. The drawback of this process is it is difficult to maintain a uniform quality level. If, however, a Continuous Casting Machine is used the liquid iron can be immediately solidified into pieces known as billets. To understand this better, compare this process to the process of making ice inside a refrigerator. You can liken the casting process of ingots to the way water is cooled inside ice moulds. The casting process of billet is similar to forming sticks of ice by rapidly cooling a stream of water. The iron billets can be later processed to produce bars of different length and thickness, angles, sheets, etc. Nitin knew there

would be a great demand for iron in the future, and hence he was in the favour of a billet manufacturing plant. However, erecting a billet manufacturing plant required a capital of thirteen crore rupees. This was almost thrice the cost of an ingot plant. Other associates also discussed the matter. Shri Krishnakumar Goyal extended his support to them and gave the go-ahead to start the work in September 2004.

It was necessary to fast-track the project in Jalna. In Nasik, Nitin started assigning the work to his trustworthy subordinates. He was strictly against shirking his responsibilities. He bade farewell to the Nasik plant only after he had ensured that all the standby arrangements were working appropriately. Nitin arrived in Jalna on 4 December 2004. The basic work on the plot, which was meant for the manufacturing plant, had already begun. Many persons involved in the project were in their thirties. The common gossip in Jalna was that these youngsters did not have the requisite experience to do business. Nitin knew from his experience that a challenging situation can be controlled by concentrating on one's work and ignoring all that is irrelevant. This helped to step up the pace of the project. The work of erecting the plant had started on 18 September 2004, and the plant became operational on 26 June 2005.

A new problem arose. Markets became unfavourable. Their produce did not have sufficient market demand. The demand that existed was only for a specific grade of iron. To produce such iron would add to the cost of raw material. It was a logjam everyone was



trying to break. During that time, Nitin and Sunil Goyal left for Indore to collect a debt of 25 lakh rupees from an Indore-based party. When the two met them, they requested more time to pay back the debt. Here, they came across a spectrometer—an instrument that could identify the grade of iron by measuring the properties of light. Nitin came up with a brilliant plan. He reached an agreement with the party to keep the machine with him until they paid the debt. They returned to Jalna with the spectrometer. The machine proved itself worthy. They used it to examine samples of raw material and sort the high-grade iron. Thus, they were easily able to fulfil the market demand for high-grade iron. In time, they captured the market for iron. They developed 18 different grades of iron.



Later, they decided to diversify the business by starting a rolling mill. Their proposal was approved in 2007. The bhoomipoojan ceremony was performed at the project site on 22 April 2007. Production in the newly constructed rolling mill was kick-started on 8 February 2008. They enjoyed the full confidence of Shri Krishnakumar Goyal, who was ready to provide them as much finance as they required. The mill was unlike other mills, which kept their products in the open. The mill was managed inside a shed with an area of nearly one lakh sq. ft. It was a costly affair, but the yearly business turnover generated by the rolling mill increased considerably. First, the sale of billets was leading that of bars, but a month later the entire picture changed. The sale of bars overtook that of billets. The accomplishments of these youths soon became the talk of the town.

Their next business strategy was branding. Sunil Goyal knew the importance of branding. After much thought, he named their brand Polaad. Through the medium of Shri Shri Ravi Shankar's program in Jalna, the Polaad brand was promoted at all levels. Today, this brand has reached all across Maharashtra.

Nitin says, 'It is wrong to say that we work for ourselves. We must work in the larger interest of the society. Money is acquired sooner or later, but to invest it wisely is up to us.' A new plant for manufacturing sponge iron equipped with state-of-the-art technology is being built in Chandrapur district. They desire to make great progress in the future and are working very hard towards it. They are committed to work for the community. These five individuals work together and they do have certain differences. These differences are only related to issues, but their goals are the same. They are presently focusing on manpower development. They continue to recruit many workers and expert engineers as they have done in the past. A large number of engineers work at their plant. Their philosophy of business is to take timely measures to prevent any crisis.

After talking with Nitin and reviewing his journey, certain aspects become clear. The confidence his parents showed in him has motivated him to progress in life. His habit of reading wide-ranging topics increased his knowledge and helped him to keep track of the latest developments. He has achieved mastery over his field. On the many occasions that have tested his patience and commitment, he has passed with flying colours. These partners remind us of Saint Tukaram words:

Acquire wealth through rightful means,
Spend it with disinterest...

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Nitin Kabra

Bhagyalakshmi Steel, Gate No. 30, Additional MIDC, Jalna



In Jalna's scorching summers, there is no relief without fans, ACs, and air-coolers. However, if you do step outside under the blazing sun, visiting Mohan Khodve's ice candy pushcart will be a welcome respite from the suffocating heat. Once there, place an order for one of his icy offerings and you see the man jump right into action. He will start off by scraping the ice block with one hand on a basic plane, and gathering the ice shavings into a neat oval ball in the other. Then he sprinkles it with the choicest colourful and tangy syrups. Your momentary wait is well rewarded when Mohan presents you the real deal to fight the heat – a flavourful ice candy!

Mohan Khodve's estimated year of birth is 1965. His family wasn't well off. There was always the conversational routine among the Khodves to do some business and better their economic conditions. Brought up in such a family,

Thanda Matlab 'Mohan Barf Gola'!

Mohan Khodve

Even a modest product has the potential to become the signature item for a city.

Take the example of the tantalizing ice candy (barf gola) served by Mohan Khodve since thirty years.

The following story is about a simple man and his equally 'cool' profession.



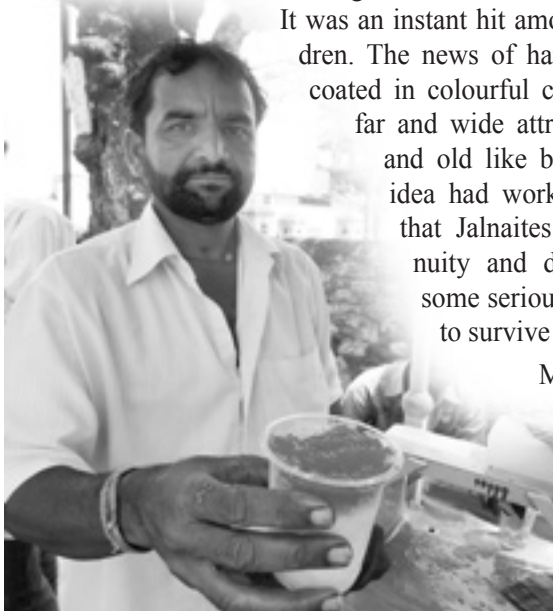
Mohan had greeted the streets with his seasonal business ventures at a time when he should be attending school. Therefore, Mohan was illiterate, but getting into the business proved to be an educational experience for Mohan. In time, Mohan learnt the math of reckoning numbers through his monetary dealings. In 1980, at the age of 14 years, he took to the schools not to study, but to stand outside and sell jujube fruits. Depending on the seasonal availability of fruits, he would sell jujubes, guavas, or custard-apples, while in the summers he offered his icy treats by popular demand. The gola's popularity eventually rubbed off on Mohan as he became well-known among his regular customers.

Mohan's gola business was an invention of necessity. Mohan previously entered the fruit selling business. The school's vicinity meant potential business for most fruit vendors. Business was tough with so many competitors. Mohan needed to make extra money. He had to come up with a unique business that would have an even greater demand among his little patrons. Like all good entrepreneurial minds, Mohan came up with an idea. All it required was an ice block from the ice factory, a plane, some tangy syrups, and thus

Jalna's signature item—, the ice gola, was born.

It was an instant hit among the schoolchildren. The news of hand-made ice golas coated in colourful concentrates spread far and wide attracting both young and old like bees to honey. The idea had worked, and it proved that Jalnaites encouraged ingenuity and desperately needed some serious cooling solutions to survive the summers!

Mohan travels widely to serve golas to his loyal customers. In the afternoons from two to four his pushcart is



at the town hall, evenings from four to five it appears at Chaman, evenings from six to eight it is at Kadrabad, and after 8 pm you can catch him near Shivaji Putla. The pushcart hits the street during the summers and pulls out in the monsoons. You have to be around to truly witness the frenzy for Mohanji's ice golas. Schoolchildren, college-teens, housewives, seniors, and occasionally officials and leaders in their cars can be seen patiently queuing up near his cart to taste the vibrant and sparkling golas. Once Mohan serves the golas, everyone abandons their inhibitions as they start noisily slurping while enjoying their luscious golas. Once sold for five paise, today his ice gola sells for five rupees.

Sometime back, Mohanji had started using an ice shaving machine but people demanded otherwise. He never figured the reason behind this, but wisely he followed the age-old business rule of 'Customer is king'! Even today he scrapes the ice with his humble plane. If someone opts for a gola-in-a-glass he drizzles it with his multicolour concentrates and garnishes it with a dollop of delicious gulkand. The multi-sensory experience that follows has satisfied many epicurean tongues and cooled many minds.

However, a seasonal business doesn't work throughout the year, and so Mohanji started selling pav-bhaji near Shivaji Putla. In the beginning, he sold the pav-bhaji on a pushcart. During those days, the pav-bhaji was sold at just 50 paise per plate! Today, the same pav-bhaji business has transformed from a humble pushcart to a nice shop nearby Ganesh Bhavan. The pav-bhaji business is run by his children; however, Mohanji continues to sell golas on his pushcart in the hot summer heat of afternoons until late evenings, and during monsoons and winters he is at his pav-bhaji shop.

It is indeed Mohanji's love for the city and the joy he derives from serving his customers that pushes him to brave the odds of weather, distance, and time. Jalna's identity would be practically incomplete without the sound introduction of Jalna's Mohan Khodve...!

Mohan Khodve

Krishna Barf Gola, Kadrabad, Jalna

Enterprise

Resource Planning (ERP) is a software-based management tool for integrating, facilitating and streamlining day-to-day business activities. ERP allows you to instantly view the Inventory status and effectively manage stocks. It lets you regulate all business dealings and processes such as monitoring warehouse stock, handling customer orders, creating purchase orders, tracking delivery of goods, and managing accounting information. As a result, all the transactions are accurately maintained and remain transparent thereby encouraging legitimate business activity.

Dinesh Chajed is among one of the very few businessmen who have successfully implemented the

ERP system in the complex business of Industrial Supply and are actively running a 'clean' business. Although he had many opportunities to trespass ethical boundaries to run an even highly-profitable venture, he has turned all of them down to manage a thriving busi-



No Holiday

Dinesh Chajed

Jalna's Dinesh Chajed, who has never taken a day off other than the second day of the holi festival, is an example of industriousness. Dinesh had set off for a career as a CA, but became a successful businessman as an Industrial Supplier; but he is not bogged down by his success. He endeavours to reach newer business horizons. He is an implementer of effective and modern business practices. This is his story.

ness worth 4–5 crore rupees. He definitely is a quintessential person who is honest yet successful entrepreneurs.

Dinesh Bhavarilal Chajed is the manager of Shri Samarth Industrial Linkers based on Jalna's Sarojini Road. He is a leading stockist of Industrial hardware, tools, and accessories who supplies to Jalna, Aurangabad and most of the Marathwada region. SSIL boasts of a diversified range of the more than 2500 products consisting of v-belts, industrial gases, grinding wheels, tool bits, drill, hand tools, bearing, MS, SS, high-tensile nut bolts, etc. Today, Dinesh has restructured the business into a tidy and well-organized manageable system. However, the truth is he never wanted to get into this business!

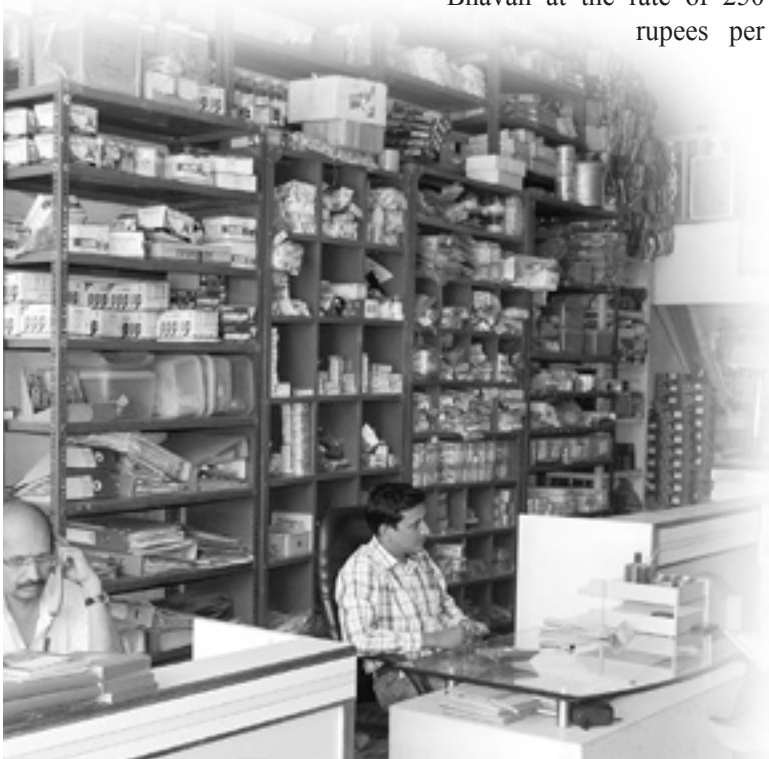
Dinesh was born on 21 March 1977 in Aurangabad. His family hails from Aurangabad. Dinesh's father, Bhavarilal Chajed arrived at Jalna for business work. In 1981, Bhavarilal came to Jalna along with his family. Dinesh gained admission to Jalna's Rashtriya Hindi School. Dinesh's ambition was to become a CA. He was inspired by his uncle, Prithviraj Chajed, who was a successful CA working in Aurangabad. After his matriculation, Dinesh came to Mumbai to pursue Commerce studies because colleges teaching Mathematics and Statistics were rare in Jalna. Dinesh was not only interested in these subjects, but these subjects were important from the perspective of his CA career. However, fate had other things in mind. In 1993, during the Mumbai bomb blasts, Dinesh, the only child of his parents, had to leave his education midway and return to Jalna. This was a regretful academic loss for Dinesh. After turning his back to studies for nearly two years, in 1996, he passed his class 12 exams. In time, he also helped his mother develop her business of imitation jewellery to a lucrative gold and silver jewellery business. During the time, Bhavarilal's business of supplying welding material was doing well.

Dinesh decided to pursue his B.Com. studies. Many of his classmates would rush to him because of his proficiency of the subject. When he was teaching his nephew, even his nephew's friends dropped by to learn from him. In fact, he has taught more than 750 students. In the year 2000, he got his B.Com. degree and gained admission to Aurangabad's MGM College. But, before the completion

of his fourth semester, he was engaged and hence couldn't complete his MBA studies.

It was this very time when his enterprising spirit was awakened. When he gained admission for MBA, the construction work of Aurangabad's Seven Hill flyover was in progress. Dinesh's college was close by. He directly approached the site official and expressed his readiness to supply welding rods. After some formal discussions, Dinesh bagged the order, but to qualify the prerequisite of an office at Aurangabad had to be met. Dinesh promptly rented an office in Jafar Gate, and thus started another branch of his father's company. Skoda Auto was setting up a plant in Shendra's MIDC area. There too Dinesh pitched successfully to get good business. It was in 2002, he had to return to Jalna abandoning his MBA studies. During that time, he appointed his Nasik's cousin brother to look after the Aurangabad business. When in Jalna, they rented a house in Ganesh

Bhavan at the rate of 250
rupees per



month and rented a shop for 1500 rupees per month.

After returning to Jalna, he became interested in his father's business. There were problems in developing the business due to lack of adequate capital. Initially, they had to contend with low profit margins. They also availed of a bank loan. They worked for hours from 8:30 in the mornings to 9:30 in the evenings. Dinesh would meet many prospective clients and promote his wares to different companies. All his efforts were directed to get the business on track. He had ambitious plans for developing the business. He went by the rule of 'Not failure, but low aim is crime.' In his marketing research and client meets, Dinesh had figured out that the growing market requirements could never be met with a limited range of welding products. Dinesh began expanding the company's product offerings from the standpoint of a bigger market. He also acquired the Marthwada's dealership of highly reputed companies like Advani Oerlicon and Isab India. Another strategy he exercised was fixing a reasonable and standard pricing for all goods. This reliable and fair pricing helped in improving the product sales. Dinesh had more than succeeded in getting the business back on track.

Dinesh also benefitted from the customer's confidence which his father had gained and maintained over the last two decades. After 2004, Dinesh began to expand his trading base. After his cousin returned to Nasik, Dinesh requested his father to look after the Aurangabad work. Since then, Bhavarilal has managed the Aurangabad business. In the past five years, Dinesh added many new items to his product range, which in time added up to nearly 2500 different items. The business was well-established in a 2000 sq. m. shop on Sarojini road with an increased workforce. Dinesh did some number crunching to discover that the daily expenses amounted to 3000 rupees. In these circumstances, working in a specific segment was impractical to earn reasonable profits. He increased the range of tools to nearly 7-8 different segments. He set the target of daily profit to at least 500 rupees from each segment. This considerably boosted the business. Presently, he does business in Jalna, Aurangabad and nearly 12 districts in Maharashtra state.

On April 2010, the onset of the new financial year, he took the serious decision of restructuring the business by implementing the

ERP system. This allowed him to monitor each and every component of the business. He could easily monitor the inventory for availability and managing purchase orders. He could instantly review the accounting information and keep a tab on the expenses and profits. Dinesh had maintained total transparency in his business.

Dinesh's viewpoint is straight and clear. He says, 'Paying taxes as a citizen is not only obligatory, but it is also instrumental for the nation's collective progress. If we wish to earn 100 rupees and part with 30 rupees as tax then it is only practical to earn 140 rupees. Due to ERP and the resultant transparent business, I no longer have to be always present in the shop. There I spare only 10 to 15 minutes of my day, while the rest of the time I can concentrate on a new project. I don't want to stop here. Each transaction is duly entered in the computer system and a receipt is generated. Without a receipt, I can earn an extra 2-3 crore rupees, but that would demand my complete time at the cost of my other ambitious ventures.'

Dinesh proudly maintains his father as the role-model in his life. He also eagerly reveals the influence of Aurangabad's Sanjay Bhansali's business approach and Sunil Raithata's social binding. Coupled with a desire to earn more money, he also expresses his desire to impart educational facility for the Shikalkari community.

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Dinesh Chajed

Shri. Samarth Industrial Linkers, Sarojini Devi Road, Jalna



The Electronic Man

Vijaykumar Aggrawal

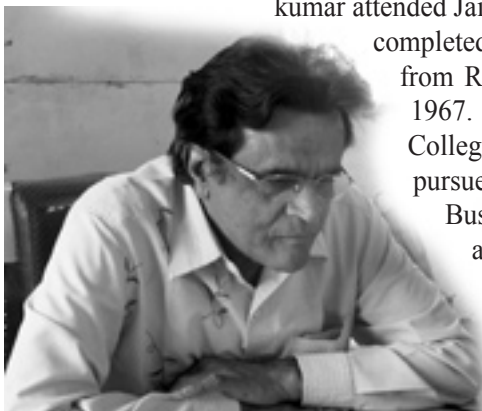
Life is not a straight road; it is full of surprising twists and turns. This was Vijaykumar Ramlal's experience. Even though he was a biology graduate, he pursued a career in electronics. He is the leading supplier of power inverters and UPS systems to several villages. His brand, Rashmi, has earned the top spot among the major brands of power backup systems in Jalna District. This story reveals how his career calling led him to success...

A son of a shopkeeper in Jalna after graduation leaves for Mumbai to pursue a diploma course in Business Management. After he returns to Jalna, he becomes a supplier of chemicals and scientific apparatuses to different educational institutes. Later, he pursues his newfound interest in electronics and starts making inverters and UPS systems. He sells them under the brand name 'Rashmi' and captures 80% of the market share... Vijaykumar Aggrawal's success story is indeed very amusing.

Vijaykumar Aggrawal was born on 6 August 1952 in Jalna. His father, Ramlal Aggrawal, ran a mercantile store in Mondha. Although Ramlal Aggrawal was not very well educated, he encouraged Vijaykumar to study. Vijay-

kumar attended Jain English School until he completed class 9. He matriculated from Rashtriya Hindi School in 1967. He graduated from JES College in 1972. Thereafter, he pursued a diploma course in Business Management from a college in Mumbai. He wanted to start his own business.

Vijaykumar was not interested to



continue the family-owned mercantile store. He was interested in science. In 1974, he began supplying scientific instruments and chemicals to educational institutes. His business soon extended its reach across Marathwada. He personally went to every place to get orders. Later, the business became more challenging and less lucrative. He consulted Prof. Suresh Lahoti, who offered him some new references. Thereafter, his business took a new turn. The year was 1979. Vijaykumar started to supply electronic devices to educational institutes. He also started to create and sell voltage stabilizers for TVs and refrigerators. He produced two different models of voltage stabilizers at his unit – 150 watt stabilizers for TVs and 400 watt stabilizers for refrigerators. In 1986, he received the first prize of Zilla Udyog Kendra on behalf of the state government for his work. He remained committed to his business for nearly twelve years. Responding to the changing market, he decided to enter the business of inverters and UPS systems.

The year was 1999. Computers made their way into offices and households. The consumption of electricity grew. The city experienced frequent power cuts. This was mainly due to inadequate production of electricity. The unscheduled power outages ran the risk of damaging electrical devices, including computers. A sudden power outage could force a computer to shut down and cause hard



disk failure. Moreover, all computer-related work would come to a halt. This created a market demand for inverters and UPS (Uninterrupted Power Supply) systems. The UPS could provide backup power to computers, and the inverters could provide backup power to household appliances. Vijaykumar decided to explore this promising new avenue. He knew where to buy raw material. His brands were already popular. He developed his own brand of UPS systems and inverters and marketed them under the name 'Rashmi'.

Basically, UPS systems and inverters are a combination of PCBs, diodes, ICs, capacitors, and transformers. Vijaykumar uses the transformer components produced in his unit. He has the necessary manpower and the equipment to produce them. His line of inverters include the 400 VA, 625 VA, 800 VA, and 1450 VA models. A single battery is sufficient for the first three types of models. Two batteries can be charged with the 1450 VA model. He supplied well-known, quality brand of batteries to his customers.

Whenever he tried marketing his product in all of Marathwada, he faced certain problems. Presently, he sells stabilizers and inverters produced in his unit. It was his interest in electronics that brought him into this business. His success is proof that a passion can be turned into a big business. After he became deeply involved in his business, he discovered many opportunities. Previously, he bought all the raw-material from Mumbai. He now buys it from Mumbai and Delhi.

He has affection for the new generation of youths. He has three daughters. He has taught many promising youths who desired to work in such a business and wished to learn the necessary skills. He is ready to provide free training to such youngsters. Many who have been trained by him have stood on their own two feet. Vijaykumar's formula to succeed in business is to develop products by identifying the needs of customers correctly and pursuing strategies that are in tune with the changing times.

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Vijaykumar Aggrawal

Rashmi Electronics, Kadrabad, Jalna



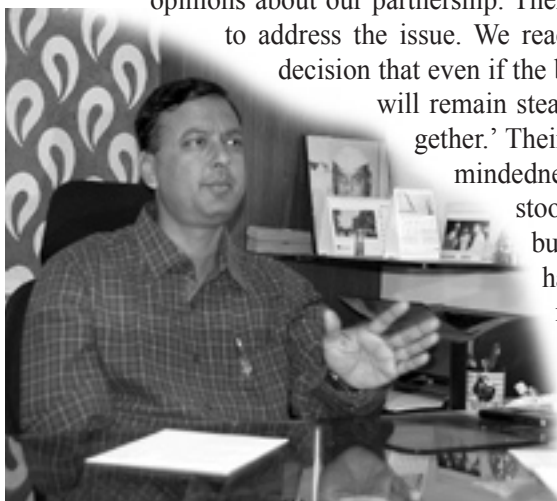
Jalna's

business world was witnessing a new revolution. Ten youths joined hands to lay the foundation of a new company, but in Jalna a new gossip was making rounds. The idea of ten partners in a business seemed too absurd or completely untrue for some while some others were already predicting the futility of their joint venture. It has been 15 years and the naysayers have yet to see their wishes come true. D.B.Soni, born in Gevrai and graduated from Aurangabad as a Mechanical Engineer is the groups 'first among equals'.

D.B.Soni says, 'We were already aware of people's opinions about our partnership. Therefore, we decided to address the issue. We reached a unanimous decision that even if the business failed, we will remain steadfast and stick together.' Their unity and single-mindedness has not only stood the test of time, but also its outcome has been more than rewarding. They have progressed from a single company to four companies and in the year 2011

Dwarkaprasad Soni

What happens when ten different minds get together? We get 'Rajuri Steel Pvt. Ltd.', a giant of a company forged by the faithful alliance between ten different people. Their monumental success is proof of the many advantages of teamwork, integrity, and determination. The story reveals the secrets behind the alliance's permanence, their fortitude, and the success of their colossal undertaking.



a fifth company is already on its way.

D.B. Soni, Santosh Mundadda, Ashish Bhala, Kailas Loya, Shivratan Mundada, Sanjay Rath, Dinesh Rath, Purshottam Toshwal, Shivkumar Loya, and Ramesh Mundadda are the ten partners. One can compare them to the ten fingers of the two hands that make tightly clenched fists to fight off any adversity. None of them had any background in the steel business. Take the example of Dinesh Rath who runs the family's textile business; however, he is good at analysing people. He is efficient in finding dealers and distributors, winning their confidence in the company's produce, and business expansion. Ashish Bala plays the role of a shrewd businessman. Such shrewdness proves most useful when purchasing raw-material, finding new suppliers, negotiating prices, and observing quality; all these aspects invariably are important for the company's growth and progress. D.B.Soni has dequate shop floor experience. He is an engineering graduate, who after skipping many different jobs settled down in Jalna in 1996 to pursue his business urge. His forte is managing the production team, encouraging team-work, motivating the team, resource management, image creation, and developing the 'ideal business model'. Thus, all these 10 people pooled their unique talents together and a steel empire came into existence.

Dwarkaprasad's father owns a Kirana store in Gevrai. His family roots are in Rajasthan; however, since 125 years they find themselves closely connected with Maharashtra. He passed class 10 from Gevrai's Zilla Parishad School. After passing his class 12 exams, in 1996, he gained admission to Aurangabad's Government Polytechnic College for Mechanical Engineering. He openly admits the fact that he was merely an average student. He did not fare too well in school; however, he was experienced in bicycle and motorcycle repair. While he was in class 8, he sneaked his father's motorcycle. This mechanical penchant paved his way towards engineering. In the engineering admission list his name appeared at the end. But, he had a unique ability and that is his mastery over the English language and there was a pretty good reason behind this. When he was in class 8, the English teacher made it compulsory for all students to take tuition. His father opposed the tuition making Dwarkaprasad the target of his teacher's ire. His teacher would strictly make him

memorise ten words per day. Any mistakes would entertain the fierce brunt of his cane. This resulted in Dwarkaprasad paying serious attention to his English studies. In fact, he had habituated himself to reading the 'The Times of India' newspaper on a daily basis though the newspaper's current edition would be available in Gevrai only after 2–3 days. Thus, he developed an interest in English, which eventually proved useful for his future.

During the second year of engineering, he visited the 'IMTEX' (Indian Machine Tools Exhibition) exhibition. This is where he developed a keen interest for an industrial venture. In 1988, after distinction in mechanical engineering, he was appointed in Bajaj Auto's three wheeler division as a trainee engineer. His work was mostly related to the shop floor. G.S. Shirsagar was the manager of the division at the time though he had studied only till class 10. He had earned the coveted post which was deemed equivalent to that of a collector purely on the basis of his grit and efforts. He served as an inspiration for Dwarkaprasad. But, Dwarkaprasad grew weary of the shop floor due to its limited commercial prospects. His request for a career change to the Purchase department was also denied. In 1989, he resigned from Bajaj to take up the post of Purchase engineer in API. After his stint in API for nearly two years, in 1992 he was appointed as Senior Engineer-Purchase in Videocon Company. He worked there for nearly a year and this proved to be the turning point in his life. In Ahmedabad, his brother-in-law was running the business of steel cauldrons and tanks. To be able to devote some time for marketing his brother-in-law's business, Dwarkaprasad quit his job at Videocon and took up the principal's chair in MIT College where he taught management from 1993 to 1996. His students benefitted from his commercial experience.

While marketing for his brother-in-law's business, he had the urge to pursue his own business. He was already planning to start a unit in partnership with his friend Ashok Thorat. The year was 1996. In Jalna, talks of starting a new business venture between a group was brewing up. Dwarkaprasad's father was interested for investing in their venture. His father asked, 'Instead of pursuing a business in Aurangabad, would you be interested to go to Jalna?' Dwarkaprasad agreed to his father's proposal and arrived at Jalna.

Although everyone wanted to get into the fertilizers business, the group had not arrived on a firm decision over the nature of their business. However, their CA advised them against the same. He said, 'The fertilizer business is prone not only to many government restrictions and interventions, but also company gains would be realised after a finite period of time. I strongly suggest capitalising on the steel business which enjoys an open market and is free from any norms.' The group agreed to his suggestion and bought the 'Mauli Steel' Company. The company manufactured steel ingots. The company started gaining profits from the very first day. Thereafter, they formed many other companies – in 1999 Rajuri Steel Pvt. Ltd., in 2003 Metarolls and Commodities Pvt. Ltd., in 2006 Laxmi Cotspin Ltd., in 2008 Shaptashringi Steels and Oils Pvt. Ltd. and in 2011 Rajuru Alloys Pvt. Ltd. is being realised in Chandrapur.

The company has also gone through some rough times. In 1997, barely after its inception, the company was charged with electricity theft and the company's production was halted for nearly two months. Almost all companies in Jalna faced this charge. These was a challenging time for the group. Eventually, they were proved innocent. Thereafter, many developments took place. A new furnace had increased their production from 50 tons to 250 tons. In 2005, they made another remarkable development. Rajuri had started the production of TMT bars using the most ultra-modern facility in all of Maharashtra. They were the first to introduce Thermax Technology in Maharashtra which resulted in a 25-fold increase in the company's turnover. Rumours of TMT bars being unsafe for commercial use were being falsely spread and allegations of buildings collapsing due to the bars ductile nature were made. The research done by the Gujarat government revealed TMT bars to be more suitable for ensuring stronger and durable structures thereby proving these allegations to be baseless. Rajuri Steel used these findings as the basis of their awareness campaign held in nearly 75 cities, to arrange exhibitions, and thus secure the people's confidence in TMT technology.

Such a big business was prone to rifts between its members and therefore they adhered to certain rules. The first one was that any member of the group could invest in any personal venture; however,

the business should be nowhere related to steel and cotton. This rule was followed by all. Dwarkaprasad promoted yet another business ‘Abhay Cotex’ which is different from the group’s business. Similarly, many others also developed different businesses. The group’s business earned their commitment because everyone adhered to the policies. Their other guideline included maintaining complete transparency in the business. Company costs would be borne by the company’s treasury, but personal expenses and indulgences should be borne individually!

Dwarkaprasad says, “In India, Jalna’s steel sales at high rates. In comparison to others, Rajuri’s sales steel at the highest rate. This is not only due to the company’s high-grade steel material but also the awareness and trust we could create in our clients. Everyone associated with the company identify themselves with the company. He acknowledges the importance of the books – Stephen Covey’s ‘Seven Habits of Highly Effective People’ and ‘The Eight Habit’- for the company’s progress. If in our business we are able to create leaders then nothing can hinder the company’s progress.”

Dwarkaprasad speaks with sheer confidence. He says, ‘This undertaking is too immense for a single individual and demands the division of responsibilities among its many partners. Moreover, each partner solely manages his responsibilities. The interest and views of our stockholders are of prime consideration. Each person plays his role boldly and our unity has been unwavering and will continue to be so in the future. The group plans to expand their business further.’ His confidence reflects his faith in the united power and the resoluteness of Rajuri’s ‘Men of Steel’.

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Dwarkaprasad Soni

Rajuri Steel Pvt. Ltd., F-12, Additional MIDC,
Second Phase, Jalna



Kalpana was a happy average housewife until her family was hit by a financial crisis. She not only rose to the challenge, but also realized her true potential. With the support of her all-weather friends, a fair amount of planning, and cooking proficiency, she started a home-grown catering business and discovered the sweet taste of entrepreneurial success.

Kalpana was born in the capital of Chattisgarh, Raipur, which was formerly a part of Madhya Pradesh. She was married to Mahesh Shah of Jalna on 12 July 1989. Soon, she was a happily married homemaker



Food is God

Kalpana Shah

The man of the house is the sole provider for his family, but sometimes even the ablest man can succumb to overwhelming odds. It is in such adversity that the woman of the house emerges as Laxmi and assumes the role of the breadwinner. This is the story of Kalpana Mahesh Shah, who stood shoulder to shoulder with her husband to deal with a family crisis and came up smiling. She started a mini-catering business, thereby becoming the Annapurna (Goddess of nourishment) to her customers and her family.

with a son and a husband to take care of. Mahesh Shah worked as the production manager of Modi Casing Company in Jalna. The company was owned by his close relative. Unfortunately, after the relative passed away in 2004, the company shut down, plunging the Shahs into a crisis. Mahesh Shah tried his best to recover from the situation, but all his efforts were in vain. Kalpana rose to the occasion and discussed her plans to sustain the household with Mahesh. Her idea was to start a catering business.

Kalpana and her friends organized bhishi parties.

Bhishi (chit-fund) is a savings practice whereby each woman of the group contributes a fixed amount of money usually on a monthly basis. The money thus collected is awarded to the winner of a periodic draw and some money is used to organize a bhishi party, which is hosted by one of the members. The party is a socializing event in which women play games, indulge in gossip, and enjoy snacks; sometimes, they eat in a restaurant. In light of the crisis faced by the Shahs, Kalpana's friends decided to skip the hotel fare. Instead, they decided to use her catering services whenever they organized indoor parties. All her friends extended their support to Kalpana. Shortly thereafter, life returned to normal for the Shahs.

Kalpana started catering out of financial necessity. It required planning and precision. Her passion for cooking developed at a very young age. Even before she was married, she loved to cook for others. Everyone enjoyed the unique taste of the food items and dishes she prepared. She poured her cooking experience and enthusiasm into her mini-catering business. Knowing perfectly well that the way to win someone's heart is through that person's stomach, she made the most of every opportunity to impress everyone with the food she cooked, and thus, gradually became a popular caterer. It was the first time after 15 years of her marriage that she had decided to start her own business, yet she managed her business successfully.

Mahesh Shah says, 'After I lost my job, my first priority was to earn money by some means. Our son was still studying. I hardly had the capital to start a business. I agreed to Kalpana's plan for starting a catering business. Whenever required, I helped her as much as possible. The food she prepared appealed to everyone. Thus, she started to get a good response from customers.'

Trupti Shah and Swati Rathi took the initiative to help Kalpana start her business at the outset. In fact, they were the ones to suggest the idea of starting a catering business to Kalpana. They often said to her, 'You have gained enough experience by cooking for 20–25 members of your family to start your own catering business.' When Trupti and Swati organized a bhishi party, they placed an order for dhoklas with Kalpana. It was her very first order! Thus, everyone became acquainted with Kalpana's cookery. Sakhi Group, a women's organization in Jalna, also offered their support to Kalpana. They placed

orders with Kalpana to provide snacks for their occasional meetings. They placed an order for different snacks from Kalpana every time they had a meeting. Soon, she started receiving personal orders from members of the group, and her business grew gradually by word of mouth. In addition to catering for parties, Kalpana began catering for outings and picnics. She also provided meals on demand. She prepared most of the food items at home, but whenever she got orders for dishes that are best served hot, she cooked the food on the spot. Thus, she kept her customers happy by serving them piping hot food. To cope with increased workload, Kalpana trained some women to assist her in fulfilling the orders. Her sexagenarian mother-in-law, Sushilaben, who belongs to the old school of thought, once believed that women should never step outside their homes, but according to circumstances, she learnt to embrace change and started helping Kalpana with her work.

Kalpana's food stalls can be seen at almost every funfair organized in Jalna. She takes orders for group picnics. She remembers that she once got an order for a picnic held at a spot two hours away from Jalna. After she reached the spot, she discovered that she had forgotten one of the food items at home. She felt completely helpless and was disappointed with herself, but she learned a valuable lesson. She became extra-careful and maintained a checklist for all her future orders. To date, she has never given her customers a chance to complain. Besides catering for picnics and parties, Kalpana provides a variety of Gujarati dresses for festivities such as the dandiya dance, which is performed during the Navratri Festival. These dresses are in great demand. Some of her Gujarati specialities such as theplas are so popular that people order them without fail before they go overseas. Kalpana has big plans to expand her catering business. Her husband manages a bakery called Shah Bakers and also helps Kalpana in her business. While speaking about his wife fondly, he says, 'She stood by me through the most difficult of times. She is my better half, in every sense of the word. She readily took the initiative to tackle the crisis head on, and we shared our happiness and worries. I am proud of her.' Kalpana's face was then glowing with satisfaction.

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Smt. Kalpana Shah,
Amit Apartment, Jalna



Dr Satish More says,

‘Those days were indeed the most difficult days of my life. I became a doctor at the behest of my father, but there was simply no demand for homeopathic treatment. My father insisted that I should practice allopathy alongside my practice of homeopathy, but I was not qualified for it. He almost ostracized me after my medical practice proved to be a failure. I was lacking funds to continue it. I was almost at my wit’s end. However, hard work and perseverance eventually pay off. Now everything is in order...’ The opening hours of Dr More’s OPD end at 3 o’clock

in the afternoon. He met only after attending all his patients. He said, ‘I also have to see out-of-town patients. Treating my patients is my top priority. Let us save the discussions for later...’

Dr Satish hails from Devthane in Mantha District. He was born on 10 November 1964 into a well-to-do family that owned a 50-acre farmland. Satish attended the Zilla Parishad High School in Devthane where education till class 7 was available. He acquired further

Dr. Satish More

When homeopathy was still struggling to gain public acceptance owing to doubts relating to its efficacy and foundational basis, Dr Satish More decided to become a homeopath. He faced the brunt of his decision when he did not see even a single patient for several months after starting his clinic. However, when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. Dr. More decided not to give up. Today, he is one of the most eminent doctors in Jalna...



education from Shivaji High School and Junior College in Lonar. He passed his class 12 exams in 1981. His father wanted him to become a doctor, but his scores were too low to gain admission to any reputed college. He finally decided to pursue DHMS. He gained admission to Homeopathy College in Yavatmal. He earned his diploma in homeopathic medicine and science in 1985. An experience during his childhood inspired Satish to take up homeopathy. His brother used to suffer from long-term stomach-ache. To treat his condition, their parents consulted many doctors. They offered various treatments, but all to no avail. Thereafter, they consulted Yavatmal's Dr Nandurkar, a homeopathic practitioner, whose medication proved potent enough to rid their son's stomach disorder forever. This made a big impression on Satish. He became inquisitive about homeopathy; thus, he resolved to learn the science of homeopathy. Dr Nandurkar also happened to be the principal of the homeopathy college in Yavatmal, which Satish attended!

After becoming a doctor, he came to Jalna where he planned



on renting a room to start his practice. His plans met with stiff opposition from his father. He insisted that Satish should practice allopathy alongside his practice of homeopathy. He contended that homeopathy had no takers, and Satish would inevitably find it difficult to afford the rent. There was much truth in what he said. Not a single patient turned up at Satish's clinic. Satish was not able to afford the rent of 600 rupees. His father was not going to fund him. He could continue his practice only because his mother gave him the

money she made by selling some of their farm's yield, but it was hardly a permanent solution to his career woes. He finally got dispirited and returned homeward to Yavatmal. He started working for an eminent homeopathic practitioner in Yavatmal, Dr G N Umredkar, who had also been his professor at the homeopathy college. He worked with Dr Umredkar for a year for a monthly salary of 300 rupees. He quit his job in 1987 to start his own practice in Jalna. He again met with failure and decided to work for Dr Umredkar. However, Dr Umredkar told him to reconsider his decision. He said to Satish, 'I don't mind if you return, but you may never be able to become an independent homeopathic practitioner in the future. Stay where you are and be persistent. Everything will be alright.' Satish also met another gentleman, Shri Nimbalkar, who assured Satish that it would be worthwhile to continue his practice for at least six months. Shri Nimbalkar's prediction came true. In 1987, he saw many patients who sought his services. A year later, everything changed for Dr Satish.

Homeopathy is a clinical method for treating patients with correct doses of natural substances. A homeopath assesses the patient's physical composition and emotional state to decide upon the treatment. Homeopathic medicines are individualized. Homeopathy is a biochemical science. Accurate diagnosis and appropriate remedies are important to avoid the side effects of a homeopathic medicine. A homeopath prepares the medicine based on the patient's medical history. Homeopathic remedies prevent epidemical diseases and are highly effective against diseases such as typhoid, malaria, conjunctivitis, etc. Homeopathic medicines are slow to act in comparison with allopathic medicines. In homeopathy, recovery is a steady process, and patients have to follow a particular diet. It is important to determine the duration of the medication in homeopathy.

Dr More conducted awareness camps at many places Yatvatmal and Jalna Districts to educate people about homeopathy and dispel the misconceptions related to it. These programmes helped him to make homeopathy popular and attract more patients. His knowledge and experience were put to the test after a number of patients began to consult him. He called the patients with medically complex cases the next day. In the meantime, he would carry out research on their

illness and decide on their treatment. In this way, he could dispense appropriate medicines to his patients, thereby ensuring effective treatment of their illnesses. Thus, he earned the faith of his patients and gained popularity. He is now a leading homeopathic practitioner in Jalna. He is involved in the activities of various social organizations and is the chairperson of the Mahalakshmi Nagri Sahakari Bank.

Dr Satish participates in community welfare programmes related to stress management and overcoming addiction. He conducts camps in various educational institutions for the students of class 10 and class 12. He shares with them scientific memory improvement techniques and helps to build their confidence. He has developed some of his own techniques to boost memory. He has also conducted such camps in many police stations.

Dr More participates in various programs organized by Brahma Kumari Vishwa Vidyalaya. He attributes his success to his mother, who inspired and supported him to remain loyal to his occupation. He also mentions the valuable support he received from his wife, Smt. Bharti. He is engaged in the workings of Chaitanya Homeo Reaserch Center and Shraddha Homeo Clinic. He is trying to gather the support of local homeopaths to build a special homeopathy hospital by bringing them together under one banner.

He says ‘Money is important but it is not everything. To live one does not require a lot of money, but to stay ahead in the competition, there is simply no alternative to hard work. Sincerity towards your work is equally important. I learned homeopathy and forever remained sincere to my occupation. This is how I discovered success.’ Dr More’s mantra for success reminds one of Swami Vivekananda’s words – ‘Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life. Think of it, dream of it, and live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success.’

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Dr Satish More

Shraddha Homeo Clinic, Dr R. P. Road, Jalna



Round Table Camp

Rahul Bansal

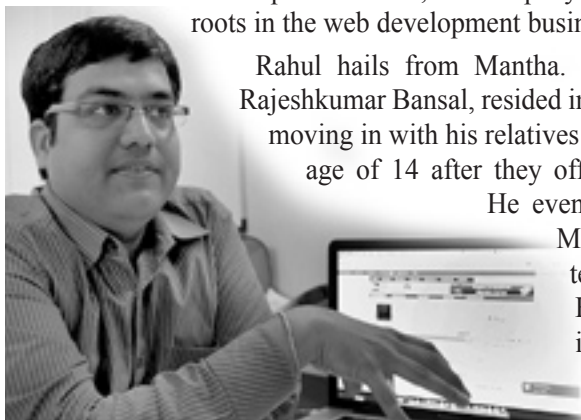
The term 'Round Table' is reminiscent of the Round Table Conference opened by the British in the year 1931 attended by Mahatma Gandhi and other eminent dignitaries. It expressed the idea that all attendees enjoyed an equal footing to enable constructive and impartial discussions. Intending to promote a culture of equity in the workplace, Rahul chose to name his company rtCamp, which is short for Round Table Camp. He and his creative team of tech-savvy associates operate from the company's office in the plush locality of Koregaon Park, Pune, to provide comprehensive web-based services to clients worldwide.

Today, websites and blogs serve as powerful mediums for information, business, communication, socialising, and recreation. Adapting to ever-changing internet-based technologies, Rahul's rtCamp at Pune specializes in providing comprehensive web-based solutions using contemporary and robust web-technologies. Rahul's journey till date reflects the life of an altruistic youth with strong conviction, a sense of camaraderie and a liberal attitude towards work and life.

Since its inception in 2009, the company has taken strong roots in the web development business.

Rahul hails from Mantha. His father, Shri Rajeshkumar Bansal, resided in Haryana before moving in with his relatives in Mantha at the age of 14 after they offered him a job.

He eventually settled in Mantha and ran a textile business. He later became interested in real estate and entered into



partnership with Laxmi Cotspin on Ambad Road. Rahul was born on 28 June 1986 to Shri Bansal and Smt. Anita Bansal. At school, Rahul was a bright student. In 1999, Rahul scored 82% in his class 10 board exams. He gained admission to SB College, Aurangabad. He could not take his class 12 board exams because of a serious accident he met with just days before the exams. A year later, in 2002, he cleared his academic backlog. This time he scored 85%. In both his board exams, he was the top scorer in the whole of Mantha. He gained admission to Pune's All India Shri Shivaji Memorial College where he pursued the Computer Science program. He studied hard and became an engineer in 2006. That same year, in his GRE exams, he secured a 590 All India Rank that guaranteed his admission to his college of choice, College of Engineering, Pune (CoEP), which is one of the top engineering colleges in India. At CoEP, Rahul had enrolled in the M.Tech. program, which included full-time internship after the completion of an academic year. Rahul chose to intern at TIBCO Company.

Rahul was preoccupied with many thoughts while pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Engineering. He declined a job offer from a foreign company. In his spare time, he built a website, devilsworkshop.org, where he posted scholarly articles and tips related to the field of engineering and computers. His website soon became very popular and developed into a community blog for techies.

In 2006, Rahul was hired as an intern at TIBCO, where he made a request for undertaking a project for IIT, Mumbai. Never before had any student made such an unusual request. From a commercial viewpoint, the project was not profitable, yet it was something he preferred to a routine job. In a matter of three days, he gave the project-related presentation and bagged the project. His salary at TIBCO, stipend from CoEP, and money received from Google for serving ads on his website added up to a monthly income of 20,000 rupees. Having gained financial freedom, he stopped taking money from his parents. After his year-long internship program ended and his M.Tech. results were declared, Rahul emerged as the M.Tech. topper of CoEP! Several career options were open to him. He received an offer for an all-expense paid M.S. study program. He

started getting high-paying job offers from American and Indian companies. Some Indian companies were ready to pay him 14–15 lakh rupees per year. However, he declined all job offers and firmly decided against working abroad. Wishing to reach out to his classmates, who were looking for worthwhile jobs, he decided to team up with them to form his own company. He became resolute in his decision after his father showed confidence in him.

Shri Rajeshkumar Bansal was a self-made man who had come a long way with sheer determination. He shared a friendly rapport with Rahul. Whenever Rahul sought his counsel, he did his best to understand his views. He respected Rahul's decisions and often stood by them after careful consideration. Rahul consulted his father about his decision to start his own business instead of accepting the high-paying job offers that came his way. After some deliberation, they concluded that there was no need for Rahul to give up his ambitions for the sake of money, in view of their sound financial condition. Rahul was now free to focus on his business. After completing the M.Tech. program, he was only making 5000–6000 rupees each month by hosting ads on devilsworkshop.com for Google, yet owing to his simple lifestyle, his monthly expenses did not exceed 8000–1000 rupees even while he stayed in the expensive locality of Koregaon Park.

In June 2008, Rahul began his journey as a self-employed individual. After only four months, he was managing a fairly stable business, and in October 2008, he applied to register his company under the name 'rtCamp'. Progressive in his approach, Rahul is committed to sustain an equitable environment in rtCamp. Everyone at rtCamp is treated equally. For instance, everyone here, including Rahul, has the same kind of chairs and seating arrangements.

Rahul faced many problems to get his company registered. When the business started to face uncertainty in January 2009, Rahul advised his long-time colleague, Vivek Jain, to land a job elsewhere. Rahul's childhood friend and CA, Samir Patil made several attempts to register the company. He finally succeeded to register the business on 12 January 2009. That very night, Rahul emailed all his friends informing them of rtCamp's inception. Radhakishan Mudliyar was the first to respond. He called Rahul on the morning of 13

March 2009 to express his interest to join rtCamp. He was Rahul's old roommate and the first person to join rtCamp! Some days later, Rahul welcomed Santosh Kamble to join rtCamp. From June–May 2009, rtCamp witnessed a sharp upturn in business. It was then that Rahul invited Vivek Jain and reinstated him in rtCamp. Along with Vivek, Ashish Sinha too joined rtCamp. On 9 July 2009, Kapil Gonge became a member of rtCamp. In fact, Kapil was previously working in another company. He came to rtCamp's office for the very first time to give news of his promotion and distribute sweets to his friends. After noticing most of his friends were working together at rtCamp, he decided to quit his job and join them. Although he was about to earn a monthly salary of 30,000 rupees in the previous company, he chose to join rtCamp at a starting salary of 10,000 rupees per month! The six-member team of rtCamp moved to their new office on 25 August 2009. Previously, Rahul's single-bedroom flat served to be rtCamp's workplace. rtCamp was fast emerging as a competent web-solutions provider and as the word started spreading through friendly channels, more and more friends started joining rtCamp. By 12 March 2011, more than thirty staff members were working in rtCamp. The one thing that all of them had in common was that all of them engineering degrees from the University of Pune.

Rahul decided to recruit extra staff to deal with the increase in workload. He introduced two shifts from April 2011. Realising that having lunch elsewhere in the upscale neighbourhood of Koregaon Park daily would pinch the pocket of any employee, Rahul introduced free lunch for all employees. Its positive outcome was that chats during lunchtime started to involve mutually solving a team member's problems. This resulted in happy and committed workforce. The idea conveyed by the Sanskrit invocation, 'Sahana Vavatu Sahanaau Bhunaktu', is practiced at rtCamp in its true sense. rtCamp's egalitarian values strengthened the bond between its employees.

What kind of services does rtCamp offer? rtCamp consists of a team of web-designers, programmers, graphic artists, and writers who work together to provide services based on the WordPress platform. These services include standards-compliant website and blog

solutions using WordPress themes, WordPress migration services, development of WordPress plugins, hosting and maintenance of WordPress servers, and secure ecommerce solutions. Rahul's first website, devilsworkshop.com, was centered around the WordPress platform and based largely on PHP scripting language and MySQL. He favoured the WordPress platform for its robust, adaptable, and extensible architecture. Rahul is so well versed in PHP that his team members rely on his experience to solve their coding problems. rtCamp has more than 500 clients. A majority of their clients are from Europe and Australia.

Rahul's accomplishments in the past three years are proof of his focus and the courage of his convictions. He says, 'Mind Control is most important. Everyone except my father stiffly opposed my decision to reject the high-paying jobs offered to me. Even some highly experienced senior people criticized me. But, I stood by my decision and my father supported me. Although my father is partly educated, his intellectual maturity and understanding can put even a doctor to shame. He is able to weigh up a situation. He showed great confidence in me and had only one thing to say – The courage of conviction you possess is what matters most. His trust in me was most important.'

Rahul is unmarried and in his thirties, yet he has developed a very mature understanding of life, quite like his father. He has a very forceful message for today's youth. He says, 'One's main aim in life cannot be solely to earn money. Students must plan their career based on their interests, area of specialisation, and long-term goals. To realise a career, money can be the means but it should not be confused as the immediate goal. Keep lofty goals and aim for something significant in life. Don't rush behind money. Money will definitely come to you if you have the courage to stand firm and act by your decisions.'

Rahul Rajeshkumar Bansal

rtCamp, Koregaon Park, Pune



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In 1985, the Aurangabad-Jalna road was facing the challenge of human invention. As an extremely rugged and gritty road, it was an ideal test track for an automobile prototype. The driver was instructed to accommodate as many passengers as he could and drive without avoiding the potholes and rough patches. The vehicle was clearly designed to dominate the Indian roads. Two similar tests were conducted elsewhere. The vehicle underwent rigorous testing and modifications before it was launched in the Indian market in 1986 under the name Tempo Trax. It took a remarkable lead in the multi-utility vehicle segment and captured a significant share of the rural market. Vinay Mohanlal Mundada of Jalna is the man who designed and developed this robust vehicle!

The Father of Tempo Trax

Vinay Mundada

Over the past few decades, Research and Development (R&D) has assumed significant importance. The pride of place it now enjoys is because of the enormous contribution made by inventors like Shri Mundada. The following is the inspirational story of Shri Mundada's journey to becoming the pioneer of the Indian auto industry...

Under



his leadership and guidance, the team of Akurdi-based auto major, Force Motors (earlier known as Bajaj Tempo Ltd.) designed and developed many passenger vehicles. Vinay Mundada was born on 5 July 1948 in a house opposite to the Dharmashala on Rajendra Prasad Road, aka Badi Sadak. The Mundada's lived in very modest circumstances. Vinay's grandfather oversaw the business of the family-owned mercantile store. He often urged Vinay to study seriously and to do something different. After Vinay matriculated from Rashtriya Hindi School, he pursued PUC-PPC (equivalent to today's class 11 and class 12). He received his engineering degree from Government Engineering College, Aurangabad, in 1967. He was the first member of his family to hold a degree.

It was a time when India was hit by recession. In September 1967, he got a job in a Hyderabad-based company where he worked for a monthly salary of 401 rupees. Meanwhile, he kept searching for other jobs and applying to various institutes to pursue higher studies. Six months later, in July 1968, he received an offer letter from the University of Liverpool in England informing him that he had been awarded a scholarship that met the full costs of his ME program and accommodation. He had to bear only his travel and food expenses. Intending to enhance his career prospects in recession, he accepted the offer and left for England. He got admitted late to the University. He pursued the course for a year and a half. After he earned his Master's degree in Engineering, he returned to India. During his stay in Liverpool, he received the guidance and support of his uncle-in-law, the late Satyanarayanji Somani, who lived in America. He was the founder of Hingoli's Tulsabai Somani Educational Trust of which Shri Vinay Mundada is a trustee.

Vinay landed a job with Greaves Company while he was studying in England. He received a modest salary that was just enough to manage his expenses. After he returned to India, he barely had any savings. However, the good thing was Greaves had a branch in Pune where Vinay was appointed as a Development Engineer. He received a monthly salary of 501 rupees. Before he went to England, he was married to Rajani, who was a member of Bansilalji Somani's family. She too was the first member in her family to earn a degree by completing B. Sc./B. Ed. course. She started to work as a teacher

after it became difficult to manage the household expenses with the salary Shri Mundada was earning. He was facing financial difficulties because he had to look after his two brothers and two sisters after their father passed away. He bravely shouldered his responsibilities with help from his uncle, the late Kiranchandji Mundada.

While he was working at Greaves, he attempted to do many other things. He was trying to set up his own business. At one time, he even considered starting a flour mill. It was then that he met the Chairperson and Managing Director of Bajaj Tempo Ltd., the late Shri H. K. Firodia whose Midas touch changed his life. He joined Bajaj Tempo in 1973. He was the first person to be appointed in the company's R&D Department. Before he retired from the company in 2007, 400 engineers worked under him. During his 35-year stint with the company, he changed the face of the company and its R&D division.

He modestly attributes his achievements to the free hand given to him by Shri H. K. Firodia. A year after he joined Bajaj Tempo, he received his first assignment, which involved replacing the petrol engine of the Ambassador Car with a diesel engine. It was similar to converting a modern-day petrol- or diesel-powered car to a CNG-powered car. There were economic reasons behind this. In 1973, the cost of petrol was 1 rupee 55 paise per litre and diesel was priced at 55 paise per litre until the oil crisis emerged in 1974 when the OPEC (Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries) nations decided to raise oil prices. This decision had a worldwide impact. In India, petrol prices shot up to 3 rupees 71 paise and diesel prices went up to 80 paise per litre. The badly hit Indian economy sent a frisson of panic through the auto industry. Many auto manufacturers entered the fray to develop diesel-powered vehicles to deal with the economic downturn. The project led by Shri Mundada to develop a diesel engine for the Ambassador met with success. The company started mass production of such engines. Nearly 500 diesel engines developed by Bajaj Tempo were making their way into the market each month. Soon, diesel engines captured a majority of the market. A jocular remark was making the rounds during that time: Even Hindustan Motors cannot make so much profit as Bajaj Tempo has made by simply selling diesel engines. The company adapted the

same solution for its three-wheeled tempos. Greaves and Italy-based Lombardini Company supplied these engines to Bajaj Tempo for which they had set up a company in Aurangabad. The operation to replace the petrol engines in cars, rickshaws, and jeeps with diesel engines continued for eight years. After Shri Mundada successfully developed a diesel engine for three-wheelers, Bajaj Tempo started manufacturing diesel-powered three-wheelers.

The next responsibility Shri H. K. Firodia assigned to Shri Mundada was to design a new jeep. The jeeps manufactured and sold in India were of American design. These jeeps had limited seating capacity. Moreover, traveling in them was not a very comfortable experience. It was a great challenge to develop a robust vehicle which was a powerful performer on Indian roads. Nevertheless, Shri Mundada solved the challenge by developing the Tempo Trax, which dominated the market for a decade. In 1999, he designed yet another vehicle known as Cruiser. This 13-seater vehicle created a revolution in the rural Indian market and generated numerous job opportunities.

Bajaj Tempo targeted the rural and semi-urban markets. Over the following years, Bajaj Tempo rolled out a wide range of vehicles, including Jeep, Minidor, Matador, and Tractor; all these vehicles were developed under the guidance of Shri Mundada. Shri Mundada is particularly proud of the Mini Four which he developed in 2002. It was exhibited in an expo held in Delhi. Shri Ratan Tata who visited the expo spent nearly thirty minutes closely examining the vehicle. He later called his engineers to have a look at the vehicle. Shortly afterwards, Shri Tata launched a similar vehicle by the name Tata S in the market. Force Motors took much longer to introduce their vehicle in the market!

India's post-independence era was known as 'Licence Raj'. This limited the production of companies. Furthermore, they could not ask for foreign technological co-operation. This greatly hampered the progress of private companies. Only three auto companies were present at that time: Bajaj Tempo, Tata Motors, and Mahindra & Mahindra. After the government adopted the policies of economic liberalization in 1991, there was a surge in foreign investment and companies had access to foreign technology. However, Shri Mun-

dada was in the favour of ‘local technology for local people’. During his 40-year stint with Bajaj Tempo, he worked on seven different areas: installing a diesel engine in the Ambassador car and Mahindra jeep, installing a diesel engine in three-wheelers, developing new models in the Matador range, development of the Tempo Trax, using the technical knowledge acquired from Mercedes’ Traveller vehicle to develop other models, developing the Minidor three-wheeler diesel rickshaw, developing the tractor. In compliance with the emission standards, he had to make major modifications to the engine which he accomplished successfully.

He took a three-year leave (1999-2001) from Bajaj tempo. He then went to Jakarta, Indonesia, to help an auto industrialist develop a heavy commercial vehicle similar to the Volvo. After he returned to India, he rejoined Bajaj tempo. Even after he retired, he used his engineering knowledge to work on the suspension technology in light vehicles, which is being used in present-day vehicles.

Shri Mundada is a hardcore mechanical engineer. He has committed himself to train the new generation. He visits various engineering colleges to counsel the students on career opportunities. He is a technical advisor and presiding judge of state level automotive technology competitions, BAHHA and SUPRA, which are organized to encourage college students to apply their technical knowledge in creating their own models. He also offers his guidance in organizing other creative programs.

He gratefully acknowledges that he could become an engineer because his grandfather, Shri Laxminarayan Mundada, supported him. He says that the guidance of Shri H. K. Firodia and the encouragement he got from Shri Abhay Firodia helped him to make his contribution to the country. He says that the limitations of Jalna pushed him to search for opportunities elsewhere. He adds, ‘While searching for new avenues, one must preserve values and never lose faith. Money is sufficient to live a life of satisfaction, but excess money runs the risk of spoiling the next generation. Therefore, don’t simply run after money, but search for inner peace and contentment.’

He has some very valuable tips for the new generation. He tells them not to undermine their worth by comparing themselves with

others. He says, ‘Humility, clarity of thought, industriousness, integrity, thirst for knowledge, self-belief, commitment, faith, and team spirit, will help you discover your worth. With the guidance and blessings of an able mentor, you can accomplish and acquire a lot within a finite time. Don’t get discouraged by failures and mistakes. Consider them as the first steps towards success. My personal success is proof of this guru-mantra that I share with you.’

Shri Mundada has made a significant contribution to the auto industry on various fronts. He has been honoured with the ‘Automobile Engineer of the year 1993’ award by SAE (India). The DBM and AICW degrees he earned while handling multiple responsibilities in Bajaj Temp are proof that his thirst for knowledge never diminished. He has also presented his research papers at international conferences. Although he is presently in his sixties, his energy and activeness defy his age. He is a pioneer who revolutionized the auto industry and made India proud.

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Vinaykumar Mundada

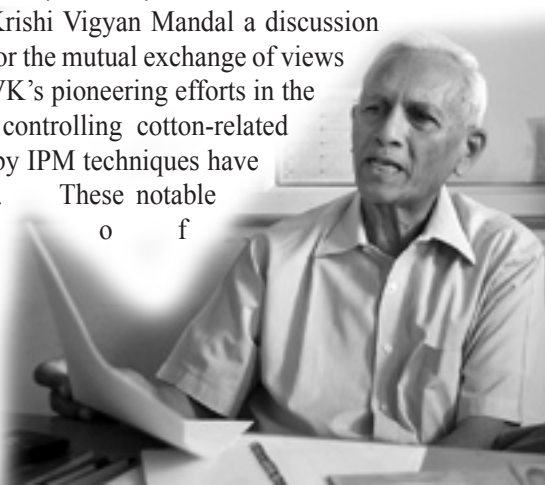
Akurdi, Pune



Vijayanna Borade

Vijayanna Borade is an agricultural pioneer. Jalna's Krishi Vigyan Kendra is his brainchild. India's agricultural revolution has been greatly augmented by his ground-breaking efforts in the fields of sustainable Water Management and Soil Conservation. Judging by the history of his humanitarian deeds one is convinced that he was indeed born for such a cause. An invaluable asset to the nation, he is aptly the 'Son of the Soil' and a compelling reason for Jalna to be proud.

In 2006, Jalna's Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) was chosen for the very prestigious National KVK Award. The tremendous honour was conferred by a specially appointed National-level Judging Committee for the successful implementation and effective outcome of mandated activities. This was definitely a most celebrated moment for Jalna's KVK. The selection process was based on three main criteria: 1) Watershed development, 2) Krishi Vigyan Mandal and 3) Integrated pest management (IPM). With an invaluable legacy of over three decades in watershed development, in 1997, KVK created the Krishi Vigyan Mandal a discussion forum for farmers for the mutual exchange of views and ideas. Also, KVK's pioneering efforts in the last six years for controlling cotton-related pests and diseases by IPM techniques have been praiseworthy. These notable achievements of Jalna's KVK made them the prime contender for the National level award. The Marathwada Sheti Sahayya



Mandal (MSSM) overlooks the administration of KVK, with Shri. Vijayanna Borade as its Project Director. In fact, he looks after the administration of the Mandal.

Vijayanna hails from Aurangabad. Associated with KVK, he has been Jalna's resident for over two decades (In 1982, Jalna received the status of an independent district and was separated from Aurangabad). Vijayanna was born on 6 May 1946 at his grandparental village, Pimpri Raja in Aurangabad district. Though his parents stayed at Patoda taluka of Parbhani district, Vijayanna had become habituated living with his grandparents. His father, Sampatrao Borade was considered to be a 'Kingmaker' of his times and his grandfather Sakharam Pant, a Padma Shri awardee, was Aurangabad Zilla Parishad's very first Chairperson. After matriculating from a Pimpri school, Vijayanna gained admission to Aurangabad's Saraswati Bhuvan College where he pursued his BA degree. In 1966, he returned to his grandfather. He says, 'Since childhood, I really wasn't studious. For class 10, I cleared the backlog of my Maths paper by appearing in October and again in March.' Clearly, his intentions are to assert that studies alone don't determine one's capability to achieve success in life. This means every individual has a fair chance in life!

Vijayanna was under his profound influence of his grandfather Sakharam Pant. In his time, Sakharam Pant was active in politics. He and Babukaka Joshi strived to preserve a healthy and conducive environment in the village. On the occasion of Padwa, they visited every village household. Regardless of caste or faith, they also visited muslim households on Id. The village was a role model of communal and social harmony. Vijayanna says, 'The village was totally free from any kind of religious or communal violence. The village elders' purposeful planning and the cooperation of the community paved the way to progress. In the district, Pimpri Raja, Golatgaon, and Anva were at the agricultural forefront. After 1961, the 'Green Revolution' was ushered, under the dynamic headship of the then Chief Minister Vasant Rao Naik. Pimpri Raja was selected as a testing site for hybrid varieties of seed. The increase in hybrid yield prices by 500 rupees per quintal by Shri. Vasant Rao Naik brought economic stability to the village. By that time, Sakharam Pant had become the Chairperson of Aurangabad Zilla Parishad which controlled most agricultural-related

activities. The Zilla Parishad's Agricultural Officers were very active and were held in high-esteem.

In 1966, after earning his B.A. degree and returning to Pimpri Raja, Vijayanna started attending the farm. Following the 'Land Ceiling Act', Sakharampant, transferred the ownership of 12 acres of his huge tract of land to Vijayanna, duly by registration process, thereby flinging him into agricultural exertion. Sakharampant also legally transferred another 10 acres of his land to Pundalik Bajirao Thale, another of his close relatives, who stayed with him. After few years, Sakharampant persuaded Vijayanna to independently cultivate the farm. Vijayanna had become a farmer in real terms. Vijayanna's father Sampatrao was against the idea of his son inheriting the land from his grandfather. In fact, at one time he had almost called him back to Patoda.

Vijayanna becomes visibly nostalgic, when narrating his indirect-upbringing experiences to the new generation of his village. In those times too, there were minor ideological disagreements, but the compelling factor was of mutual co-operation. As a customary practice in the village, Sakharampant often took Vijayanna along with him ever since he was a child. One of the best ways of inculcating values in children is by way of practical demonstration. This indirect upbringing led to Vijayanna's appreciation of his personal responsibilities.

After his grandfather's demise, Vijayanna reluctantly contested in the elections for the Gram Panchayat's various operative societies. In these elections, he emphasised on reconciling with the contesting parties. He succeeded in his attempts to promote fair elections without mutual animosity between rivalling candidates. During this time, he was engaged in farming. He was also involved in various social activities. In such circumstances, he was reluctant to contest in the two elections. Many were discontent with Bhimrao Bakal Patil who led Aurangabad in the 1980 District Bank elections. In order to defeat him, a reluctant Vijayanna was once again persuaded to stand for the election. Pressurized by a third candidate, Vijayanna said, 'I am not turning back, come what may'. Thus, Vijayanna resolved to fight the election. Vijayanna was able to set up his own election mechanism with the help of his friends. Many leaders and welfare activists stood in the election. In the district, for the very first time an untraditional

practice came into existence. Vijayanna says, 'I literally took all the societies' chairpersons on a pleasure trip and then won the election by massive votes. Vijayanna was the vice-chairperson for the quinquennium 1980–85. He realized in his years of service that politics wasn't his forte. However, he had already spent over a decade in such pursuits.

Thereafter, Vijayanna had the option of either farming or focusing on social welfare activities. Later, he shifted to Aurangabad. Vijayanna bought a plot in the N1 sector through the CIDCO scheme and also became the proud owner of a five-room house for 75 lakh rupees in CIDCO's housing development scheme. Soon he became involved in the works of MSSM. This was the beginning of his bright career.

MSSM is a Non-governmental Organization (NGO). In 1968, MSSM started off as a Public Charitable Trust with the joint initiative of Manikdada Anvikar, Br Jawaharlal Gandhi, Badrinaryan Barwale, Dr. Moses, Nivrutti Patil Salunke, Kumar Anvikar, Janardhan Salunke and others. It was first founded by Scottish Missionaries in 1950 and entitled 'War On Want'. On their final departure to their homeland, they handed over the organization to local community members. Thereafter, the institution is led by Badrinarayan Barwale and J. M. Gandhi and is operated from Jalna. MSSM has to its credit of importing a 6-inch borewell drilling machine. In those times, it was a relatively big organization with a nearly 350 member staff and three land rover cars. MSSM has also launched the 'Food for Work' a Rozgaar Hami Scheme (Employment Guarantee Scheme) and conducted many ancillary agricultural activities. MSSM helped in facilitating loans through banks for water development projects and provided assistance for digging wells. MSSM extended agricultural technologies such as tractors, caring unit, fertilizers, and seeds. But, MSSM's journey hasn't been very easy. It has also gone through difficult times. One such instance is when MSSM facilitated loans through banks to certain beneficiaries. However, the beneficiaries were completely indisposed at the time of loan repayment and the banks held MSSM liable. MSSM went through a most distressing phase after being put in such a quandary. Thereafter, MSSM adopted a charity-based mechanism for all their future endeavours.

In the following years, Vijayanna became an inseparable part of MSSM. Presently, Badrinarayan Barwale presides as the institution's Chairperson with Br. Gandhi as the Secretary. Vijayanna is the Project Director and looks after the complete administration of MSSM. MSSM operates on the Adalat road premises from a two-room office generously granted by J.M. Gandhi. Br. Gandhi was coupled with the institution because of his association with Vijayanna's grandfather. Br. Gandhi too was a socially conscious person. While following his profession, Br. Gandhi duly maintained his personal relations. He owns a Ferguson Tractor Agency. It was through him that Vijayanna became associated with MSSM. Gradually, Br. Gandhi involved Vijayanna in the institution's activities. Contended with the work, Vijayanna became actively involved in MSSM's administration, a responsibility unsuspectingly accredited by Br. Gandhi. When people passed on their business' reigns to their children or close relatives, J.M. Gandhi considered Vijayanna as the beneficiary. Br. Gandhi indeed is a liberal-hearted and most beneficent personality in MSSM's history. J.M. Gandhi also appointed other youths alongside Vijayanna.

In 1981, after Dev Pimpalgaon received financial aid from the Swiss Development Corporation, the MSSM convened a meeting to discuss its undertaking. This was a completely different project for MSSM which had undertaken tasks like building of cement dikes, plantation programs, CCT, lentic reservoirs (Pazhar Talav), and groundwater irrigation (Upasaa Jalsinchan). These projects were publicized to attract farmers and acquaintances. MSSM was involved in a watershed development project in Adgaon, a barren village. The voluntary program demanded a practical approach for water conservation as well as preventing soil erosion. MSSM had dug wells when the groundwater levels were favourable. After the borewell machines were introduced the excavation process was less time-consuming; however, by that time, the situation became drastically adverse because no groundwater availability even at great depths. This necessitated water conservation rather than the exploitation of natural water resources. In Adgaon the Panlota project was implemented. The project met with phenomenal success and following the dramatic change it brought in Adgaon, it gained nationwide attention. Thereafter, MSSM handled another NABARD assisted Indo-Ger-

man mega-watershed project involving a village cluster. Following Adgaon's success, Fr. Hermann Bacher of Social Centre, Ahmednagar provided his full support and facilitated the German funds for the project. Vijayanna was extremely delighted with both the scope and nature of the work. He also received the satisfaction of working on a successful project. MSSM was actively involved in the second phase of the project at Asarkheda – Karvanchi where they were managed to save a staggering 13 lakh rupees against the estimated cost. This was due to mass participation. The project had been executed extremely well and it proved that both water conservation and soil conservation are equally important to maintain groundwater levels. The funding organization refused financing when they learnt of the unapproved additional work. But, after evaluating the huge savings of nearly 13 lakh rupees the funds were promptly approved. Indeed, this was the result of dedicated work.

In the wake of it all, the ICAR (Indian Council of Agricultural Research) an autonomous National Organization was forming Krishi Vigyan Kendra's in many districts in association with the Central Government Agricultural Institutions and Colleges. Vijayanna earnestly desired to open a KVK in Jalna through MSSM. He forwarded his proposal to the Central Government. In 1992, with the due approval the Kendra was formed in Jalna. At that time Shri. Sharad Pawar was the security minister and Shri. Balram Jakhad was the Agricultural minister. Shri. Sharad Pawar personally looked into the matter to pass the proposal. Thereafter, the institution got a new avenue to execute their welfare programs. The KVK in Jalna's Kharpudi area has received the recognition and appreciation of all political parties and from all strata of society. This is because of Vijayanna's teamwork-based attitude. He is very grateful to Shri. Sharad Pawar who was instrumental in the Kendra's approval. KVK marched the way to progress because of its pioneering research and the active participation of the farmers. Vijayanna is proud of the proactive nature and the bonding between KVK's members and mentions that these alone are the primary reasons for the KVK's success and the numerous accolades it has received.

Vijayanna also sheds light on the novel reward-based forum platform provided by KVK. He says, 'On the 5th of each month, a

farmer's forum is held for knowledge exchange and expressing of views. The farmers decide on the topic of the day. In each successive program, the farmers are also asked seven questions based on the previous program. For answering all questions correctly, the winner is rewarded a silver coin. This activity and the reward prize are collectively sponsored by all farmers. The farmer's greatly benefit from this activity.' The second undertaking is of Water Shed Management, of which Vijayanna is most proud about. Vijayanna has conducted exhaustive research on this subject. The third undertaking is of Integrated Pest Management. Normally, pesticides are used to protect the crops after infestation. But, prevention is always better than cure. Take the instance of saving the invaluable cotton crop by intercropping (planting mostly in alternate rows) trap-crops like black-eyed peas (chawlee) between the main crop. The comparatively sweet black-eyed pea crop lures the pests away from the cotton crop. Thus, the precious 'white gold' or cotton crop is saved. Similarly, to combat the bollworm, marigold is alternately planted between the cotton crops. The female moth lays the eggs on the marigold, attracted by its bright colour. On hatching the larvae get trapped inside the marigold flowers. Even after implementation of these IPM methods, if the problems do appear then it is definitely have a very low negative impact which may be controlled by the use of pesticides.

On the occasion of Holi each year, KVK organizes an open discussion forum in which people share their experiences, exchange information, and clarify their doubts. Since women would never participate on that day, a similar program is organized specially for them on the night of Kojaagiri Purnima. The discussion is conducted on a unanimously decided topic. The program concludes with the complimentary dispensing of milk and water. These programs are proof of the warmth and affection extended by the people to KVK. KVK also runs three other programs. KVK imparts training based on a study program devised with the help of Yashwantrao Chavan Open University and one other centre that provides an Agricultural Diploma. These schools are economically viable to the common man. However, because of the existing financial constraints these programs can only be sustained by charity aid, and Vijayanna is strongly hoping to get more sponsors.

Vijayanna has made a miraculous journey. After giving up a bright political career, he consciously embraced a social welfare cause, after which he never strayed into politics. His decision received the support of Baburao Kadam and late Madahavrao Patil. In time, Vijayanna proved his decision to be a right one. He has received many awards and earned many praises. At present, he is active in many governmental and non-governmental roles. He is the Vice-Chairperson of Maharashtra State Watershed Advisory Council, a position at par with the Cabinet Minister. The other positions he holds are the Rajyapal of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada College, elective senate member of Vasantrao Naik Pratishthan Mumbai, MITRA (BAF) Nasik's member and the other positions he holds are in central government's Sports Committee and Dehradun's Watershed Organization.

Vijayanna reveals about the growing infertility of the soil. He urges that the soil fertility should be restored by implementing soil-conservation. He is also saddened by the fact that NGO's have overtaken Social Welfare Institutions. He is concerned that today's institutions are more inclined to publicity and fame rather than actual work.

During Vijayanna's retirement from politics, he had another episode. On Shri. Sharad Pawar's (President of the newly formed Rashtravadi Congress) decision, Vijayanna very reluctantly contested the elections in Jalna's Loksabha Matadar Sangh. He was more worried if his political 'party-tag' would affect the Kharpudi Centre. He could not win the elections, but he says, 'It I had won the elections I would have done justice to my role of MLA. Everyone would have witnessed a different MLA.' However, there was one novel thing he did in the elections and that is printing agriculture-related information on the backside of his campaign pamphlets. 'I don't know if people would have accepted me as a party candidate, but the one thing I am sure is that they will always accept me as a farmer.' This quality of Vijayanna has won the hearts of many. He advises all, 'Have a creative approach towards work and involve everybody. The ability to take everybody forward only can create a new India.'

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Vijayanna Borade

Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kharpudi, Jalna

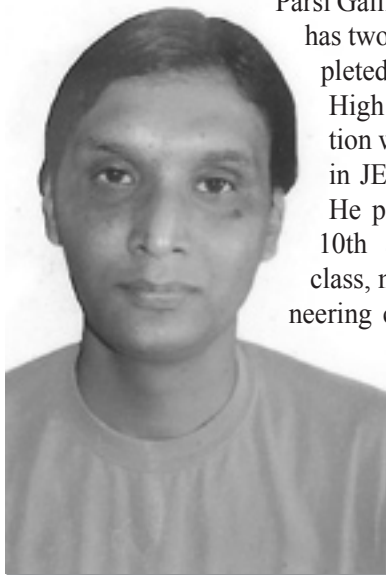


Kailash Malode

Aged 33...an ambitious spirit...great energy...commitment to excel...promising career – this is the story of Shri Kailash Malode. Born to a small-business family in Jalna, Kailash did not get career advice. As the master of his own destiny, he has taken his own decisions in life. He also gained from the valuable lessons of some wonderful people. Presently, working as a project co-ordinator with a reputed multinational company hasn't stopped him from dreaming big.

The key to achieving anything worthwhile is willpower. After a simple diploma certification in Mechanical Engineering, Kailash took charge of his life and career. He now works as a project co-ordinator with MAN Diesel. As an ambitious and self-motivated individual, he aims for greater goals in life.

Kailash was born on 1st January 1978 to a middle class family. His father Shri. Dnyaneshwar Malode ran an oil shop in Parsi Galli of Jalna's Kadrabad area. Kailash



has two brothers and two sisters. He completed his schooling from Maharashtra High School. Thereafter, in consultation with his friends, he took admission in JES College for the science stream. He passed with first class in both the 10th and 12th standards. After 12th class, many of his friends opted for engineering colleges for career specialization; however, Kailash was among the select few who couldn't make it to the selection list. Together, these friends decided not to go for a B.Sc. degree, and choose some professional course helpful to their career. They decided

for a polytechnic diploma course and on that basis reattempt for engineering admissions. Of the two polytechnic options of Mechanical and Civil Diplomas, Kailash applied for Mechanical Diploma. In 1998, Kailash got a Diploma in Mechanical engineering. But, it was during his final exams that his fate took a wrong turn and he fell ill. Bedridden for four days, he had to skip some papers. After nearly six months, in October, he managed to clear the backlog. However, he couldn't secure the required score when it mattered most and lost the promising opportunity to secure an admission in Engineering College.

Kailash was now faced with uncertainty. All his sincere job hunting efforts proved useless and gradually he became more depressed. Kailash's father had bought another oil shop and requested Kailash to manage it. With a heavy heart, Kailash agreed and for nearly two months, Kailash was looking after the day to day business of the shop. He was also following up with Jalna's NRB company after applying for a related job vacancy. This time his efforts paid off and he started working at NRB. In the company, he was deputed in the assembly workshop and later transferred to the mechanical division. But, there was hardly any scope of utilizing the knowledge of his Mechanical Diploma. In the absence of further progress, Kailash felt uneasy. At the end of 1999, he finally quit the job. Kailash came to know his friend Santosh Patil was learning AutoCAD in Aurangabad. After meeting with Santosh, he decided to take up the AutoCAD course. He was also joined by another of his colleagues, Shri. Dnyaneshwar Bujade. For the next three months, from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm Kailash attended the AutoCAD classes in Aurangabad's Padampura area. This was the beginning of the year 2000. After finishing the course, Kailash soon discovered that the 2D CAD/CAM course he took was outdated since the related industry was now using 3D CAD. Kailash needed to upgrade his skills and learn Pro/ENGINEER software. The same course was offered at CAD-Tech institute run by Mr. Ravindra Vaikole; however, Kailash did not have the funds required and was also reluctant to ask for his family's help. Finally, through a friend, Kailash conveyed to Shri. Vaikole his readiness to pay the course fees once he is employed. Shri. Vaikole agreed to his proposal. Kailash attended Shri. Vaikole's class and the course duration of 3 months almost came to an end. It was then that Shri.

Vaikole received a call from Shri. Sunil Raithata wanting to learn Pro/ENGINEER software. Shri. Raithata requested for an instructor who could teach him at Jalna. This was an opportunity in waiting for Kailash who was from Jalna and indeed Shri. Vaikole chose Kailash to teach Shri. Raithata. This was one of the main highlights of Kailash's professional journey.

In the course of the training, Shri. Raithata himself offered a position to Kailash in his company. After discussing with Shri. Vaikole Kailash took the job offer and in 2002 joined Vinodrai. The initial 2D work was looked after by Shri Bagul. Kailash had to convert the 2D designs to 3D. He also got to research and work on many different projects. This helped him in applying his skills for effectively presenting the products before the clients. He worked on a number of projects ranging from product design to container packaging. In 2005, Kailash wanted to take up B.Tech studies, but studying while working was going to be impractical. Impulsively, he left the job. Even Shri. Raithata was ready to grant him study leave, but Kailash disagreed. After six months of preparation, he appeared for the B.Tech exams. Once more, Kailash was facing unemployment. He was also hesitant of joining Shri. Raithata's company. This was because Shri. Raithata had counselled him against leaving the job and yet Kailash chose otherwise. He returned to Aurangabad and started working in Shri. Vaikole's training centre, but it didn't take long for his mind to start wandering. He started hunting for another job. Soon after, his job application was answered by MAN Diesel company and he was called for an interview. In 2007, Kailash received his appointment letter from the company.

In the first few months of joining the company, Kailash got to learn many new things and got comfortable with its work culture. Here, the work was mainly related to diesel engines. The company's main office is at Augsburg, roughly 70 kms from Germany's Munich city. This is where major work happens and some work is carried out at the Aurangabad unit. The company is a leading manufacturer of very high performance diesel engines. Engines with nearly 1300 kW capacity are manufactured here. Largely four-stroke engines are designed and manufactured here.

Around the month of May, the company decided to send six of

its employees to Germany and thus everyone in the company was inquired. This was definitely a unique opportunity for Kailash who stepped forward to make the most of it. What Kailash didn't know was this tour was going to be the most critical juncture of his life. Kailash was in Germany, from October to December. In these three months, the officers at the main branch took notice of Kailash's work proficiency and manpower management. On returning to India, Kailash was offered a direct promotion from CAD Designer to Project Co-ordinator. Kailash was pleasantly surprised as well as a little intimidated. In just six months of his service, the new title would definitely increase his responsibilities and accountability. He even attempted to escape this sudden responsibility, but his seniors showed confidence in him and offered their support. Soon he was managing a team of six members. Presently, after nearly three years, he is now a co-ordinator for a team of ten. In his journey so far, apart from his family he is most thankful to two other persons – Vinodrai's Shri. Sunil Raithata and Shri. Ravindra Vaikole who have greatly influenced him and boosted his confidence.

Kailash tells how he took all important decisions in his life and firmly stood by them no matter their consequence. Whether it was learning new skills, leaving a job or going abroad, he has made his own choices. Thus, he has charge of his life and become an absolutely confident individual. 'Everyone must learn to believe in oneself and constantly work towards progress.' – is Kailash's advice to everyone. At nearly 33 years of age, he is much more tremendous potential of reaching still greater heights because of his unshakable confidence.

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Kailash Malode

Project Coordinator, MAN diesel, Waluj MIDC, Aurangabad



Thomas

Edison, the world-famous inventor, once said, 'Genius is one-percent inspiration, ninety-nine percent perspiration'. This is the secret behind the success of renowned writer and novelist, Jalna's very own, Rekha Shivkumar Baijal, whose vast literary knowledge and deep spiritual insight reflect in her works. The encouragement of her husband and in-laws, literary influences of various writers, and the impressions of everyday events have enriched her imaginative experience. Recently, a fresh chapter was added to her creative journey with her crowning as the

Rekha Baijal

*Why does an artist paint?
Why does the dancer dance?
Why does a writer write?
We may never find answers
to these questions because
creativity is an inscrutable
human faculty. However, it
can be witnessed and cher-
ished through the persons
in whom it flows. Jalna's
Rekha Baijal is one such
enigma. Since many years,
she has been captivating
readers with her creative
writing. As Maharashtra's
distinguished novelist and
poetess, she has many liter-
ary works to her credit.*



President of the Mahila Sahitya Sammelan held at Parbhani.

Rekha Baijal's maiden name is Rekha Digambar-rao Sapre. Born on 6 July 1952, to a middle-class brahmin family, Rekha was positively influenced by her father. Back then (1950–60), Shri Digambar-rao Sapre was a Block Development Officer, and biennial transfers were part of his job. Thus, Rekha attended schools in Soygaon, Gevrai, Umarga, and passed class 10 from a Solapur school. Shri Digambar-rao was interested in spiritual books. After retire-

ment, he wrote on spiritual scriptures such as the Bhagvad Gita. Rekha was raised in such a family. She thoroughly read Shri Khandekar's *Yayati* at the age of six! After recalling those days, she says, 'I deliberately did the things my mother advised me against. My mother had strictly warned me against reading *Yayati*, but I did. This piqued my interest in literature.' The Sapres also shared a passion for singing. In school and college, Rekha was often requested to sing the then famous movie songs. She even received formal education in classical music and a vishaarad degree. However, her journey into the world of music remained limited.

While her father was posted in Jalna, Rekha completed her BA studies. In 1970, in her college years, she fell in love with Shivkumar Baijal. In such conservative times their romantic friendship was bewildering, especially because they hailed from culturally diverse families! Rekha was a Brahmin, whereas Shivkumar was a Punjabi. Rekha's father heartily welcomed their decision to marry. However, the Baijal family was from the old school. Initially, Rekha's mother-in-law strongly opposed the intermarriage, but Shivkumar finally managed to convince her. On 8 February 1976, Rekha was happily married to Shivkumar Baijal. In those times, food in the Baijal household was cooked on an open hearth and that too for nearly twenty members! Rekha's mother-in-law was religiously orthodox. She firmly believed that her daughter-in-law must abide by age-old practices and manners. She often urged her to secure the pallu (loose end of sari) over the head. In time, Rekha won everyone's heart with her tactful behaviour, yet those were challenging times for Rekha. Her mother-in-law was of the view that a woman should limit herself to performing household chores, raising children, knitting and stitching, and should not indulge in activities like writing. Later, this very lady would warmly inquire about her daughter-in-law's upcoming projects. This change happened after a long time. Rekha particularly mentions that her husband stood by her during this period.

Rekha had started writing since long. As a writer she could hardly interact with the outside world owing to unfavourable household conditions, but her writings went out for publishing. They started being published in periodicals. This went on for nearly five years. She once received an invitation for participating in a programme at Aurang-

abad. This was the first time everybody saw Rekha Baijal in person. Until then, some even suspected her of being a man using a woman's pen name – an occurrence common to the Marathi literary world of yesteryears. This trick was employed mostly by male authors to gain immediate popularity. However, Rekha's presence at the programme warded off all suspicions and rumours.

The other reason Rekha was mistaken for a man was her unfeminine style of writing. Her personal or relational experiences never showed up in her work. She says, 'The life that I lived was basically boring. It was hardly a basis for writing any worthwhile. Therefore, I started penning my ideas from imagination.' This became the core strength of her writing. She never really planned on writing. It all happened spontaneously and thus she made an auspicious start. She wittily adds, 'My home reminded me: Acknowledge your womanhood and declare it forcefully. Writing told me: Purposely forget that you are a woman.' This is the reason why the typical feminine style hardly surfaces in her writing. Familial elements rarely appear in her works. She adds, "My writings are less descriptive. Mostly, the stories progress through conversation. This adds drama. At times I feel that more description was needed at a particular point, but that is hardly my cup of tea. 'She gently arched her knee...pushed her big toe, gave momentum to her swing...' – I can hardly write something like that!"

She openly speaks about her formative years as a writer and how G. A. Kulkarni's literature has influenced her. She finds GA's stories to be mostly allegorical, and therefore based on an eternal truth. She adds that GA's works have undertones of philosophy and end up being mystical, whereas Grace's mysticism advances towards esotericism. As part of her studies she has embraced the works of Kusumagraj, Baburao Bagul, Gangadhar Gadgil, P.B. Bhave, V. P. Kale, M. N. Advant, G. N. Dandekar, Prof. Shivajirao Bhosale, Ram Shevalkar, and T. V. Deshmukh. She has also read the works of many other authors. Rekha's academic years were spent in rural areas without any exposure to English. Thereafter, she never attempted to learn English.

Women's entry into literature presented the lives of women before the world. Their literary output gave a vivid account of their experiences, women's issues, various aspects of womanhood, golden moments, and tragic events. Broadly speaking, this came to be identified

as women's literature. In this regard, Rekha's works were an exception. The purport of her writings was always out of the box. Her works not only broke out of the commonality of women's literature, but also pushed the boundaries of literature. Instances of her experiences did emerge in her works, but the settings were totally different. In 'Mrutyu Jaglela Manooos' she talks about death. In this novel, she speaks from personal experience, and the impressions of the incident related to her friend's mother-in-law, who took the Santhara vow (a Jain ritual of fast unto death). In the novel, she has reproduced these experiences in a very different context. Her fictional work 'Agnipushpa' is based on the Third World War and in 'Jalparva' the main premise is water. She has also experimented in the science fiction genre. All in all, she is a multifarious writer, who touches on the aspect of spirituality. Her spiritual connection has helped her break away from conventions, customs, and man-made differences of caste and religion. This ideology manifests in her writing. She maintains that God is omnipresent. Her faith in life is reinforced by the belief that life even if constrained by religious dogmas, eventually, transcends such artificial boundaries.

Rekha is upset by certain things. She disapproves of personal differences in the literary world, and believes there is an immense scope for enriching it through mutual discussion and exchange. She cannot tolerate the bigotry exhibited by certain members of the literary fraternity. She regrets sexism in the literary scene and the undeclared ostracizing for being a Brahmin. Writers must be judged by their work and not by their religion, gender or beliefs. She speaks her mind on feminism. She says, 'What is women's liberation all about? Are women resorting to this approach and denying their nature?' She further adds, 'How long are we going to westernize ourselves? Does copying men amount to women's liberation? A woman cannot reject her natural disposition. Are they going to care for our culture?' Apart from posing such questions, she stresses that men need to take notice of women's hardships and acknowledge the worth of women who handle household responsibilities. She strongly advises women to overcome their inferiority complex which she has successfully dealt with since childhood. After marriage, her first name was changed to 'Girija', but she assertively retained her first name as 'Rekha'. After all why must anyone sacrifice one's own identity?

Rekha has authored novels on diverse subjects, which include Devrat, Agnipushpa, Yugaavart, Trupta, Jalparva, Prasthan, and Mrutyu Jaglela Manoos. She has written a children's novel titled Prakashachi Fule and twelve anthologies namely Maanas, Tapasya, Vigyan-katha, Kidnapping, Antarikshatil Shejari, Aadim, Swapnasth, Spandan, Pakshi Jaye Digantara, Nisatate Kinare, Clone, and Ashabda. Akashodde, Bhint Kachechi(drama), Mummy Robo(monologue), Prakash Shalaka, and Nakshatra(lyric essay) are also part of her literary works. She has been bestowed various accolades for her rich literary contribution. She has won six state awards and many other awards, including the Narhar Kurandakar Award, B. S. Mardekar Award, Pune Marathi Granthalaya Award, and Kusumatai Chavan Award. Last year, she made her entry into Hindi literature. The Hindi version of her Marathi drama 'Bhint Kachechi' (Kaanch ki Deewar) was very well-received. Her work Ab to Jiya Jaye, a collection of her poems in Hindi, was published lately. It contains a foreword by superstar Amitabh Bachchan.

Crossing into her sixties, when she looks back, she still treasures the four years of her college life. She fondly remembers her two college teachers – JES's Bardapurkar Sir, and Lila Govilkar Madam, Ahmednagar's Marathi teacher, who had greatly bolstered her morale. They inspired in her an independent outlook towards life. These four years were the times of positive personal transformation. She tells, 'My role as a wife, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, and mother would completely dilute my individuality. However, I had to retain myself and struggle to retain my identity. Even if covering my head at home was necessary, I had to avoid breaking my neck under it. This needed great mental strength and confidence. I stepped into marital life with the youthful vigour and confidence mustered in my college years and kept progressing forward. Even today the wonderful memories of my youth – an age filled with irrepressible aspirations of life and brimming with happiness and enthusiasm – haunt me. Though I know well that it is impossible to relive the past, yet I wish I could entreat God to give back those four years, so I can live them again... even in exchange for the rest of my remaining life.'



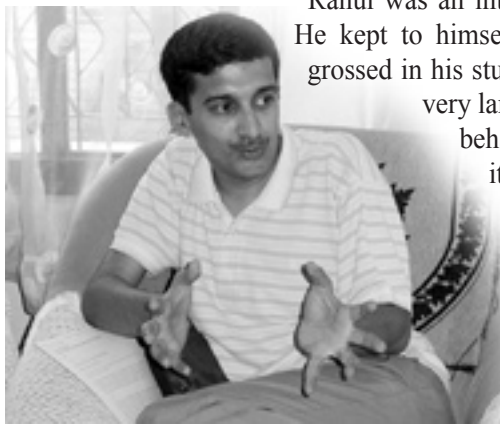
Rekha Baijal

Income Tax Colony, Jalna

Rahul Lahoti

In 1997, Rahul Lahoti was on the HSC Board merit list. His name and photo appeared in all major newspapers. The premises of JES College were bubbling over with appreciation for Rahul, who stood first in Marathwada and second in Maharashtra. Shri Suresh Lahoti, professor of physics of JES College, and Smt. Prabha Lahoti are his parents. Rahul attended St. Mary High School and passed the class 10 exams with a 88% score. He entered the highly-prestigious private university, Birla Institute of Technology (BITS), to pursue Computer Engineering by virtue of his impressive score in the class 12 exams.

In the movie Three Idiots, the message given by the protagonist Ranchod Das Chanchad, played by Aamir Khan, was 'Make your passion your profession'. However, this idea has already taken root in many because there was never a shortage of so-called 'idiots' in our society. Take the example of Rahul Suresh Lahoti, who turned down a high-paying job offered by Microsoft, America, to work as a researcher in an organization dealing with information analysis. This is his story.



Rahul was an introvert since childhood. He kept to himself. He was mostly engrossed in his studies. He did not have a very large circle of friends. His behaviour and personality developed in a very different way while he was in Pilani. BITS is one of the most coveted institutes; it is the dream of almost every student who wishes

to pursue engineering studies to get admitted to BITS! Rahul says that several students from all over the country turn up at BITS. Top-pers of each board can be definitely seen at BITS. It is best described as the conglomeration of the most brilliant minds.

The instructional style at BITS is unique. Rahul says, ‘At BITS, the focus is not on creating bookworms but on the all-round development of students. The study programs are rigorous as well as flexible. Professors have a different approach to teaching, and they lay emphasis on strengthening basics in education. The entire academic year is lined up with various programmes that supplement education. One can afford to skip a class but not the programmes because they vastly enrich one’s experience. Exams are held quite frequently at BITS. Basically, life at BITS is very demanding. The institute strives to provide up-to-date knowledge to the ‘brains’ from across the country. The expansive campus also includes adequate hostel accommodation for students. Rahul got to learn and share many things with his room partner. Rahul says, ‘The institute provided me the requisite knowledge of Computer Science and a degree, but most importantly it made a man out of me. It taught me the skill to read people, to work with a steady mind in the tensest and demanding environments, and prepared me mentally to take decisions. BITS helped me to develop my personality and to realize my true potential.’ Rahul earned his computer engineering degree from BITS in 2001. He planned his next move. With his family’s approval, he set out to obtain a Master’s degree in Computer Science.

Rahul decided to pursue his Master’s degree from the University of California in San Diego, America. He was always interested in the field of research. It is one of the leading universities known to offer the best education on the subject of Computer Security. The experience of learning at this reputed institute proved to be very valuable to Rahul. In his two years at the university, he learnt many new things. Here, he got to interact with the brightest minds from all over the world. He found exchanging ideas and experiences with them as enriching as the classroom sessions. After few months, he got the opportunity to work as a teaching assistant, which involved assisting professors by helping the students understand the related subject. Thus, he earned a reasonable income and thereby enjoyed

economic independence.

After he got his Master's degree in 2003, he received many job offers from top-notch software companies located all over the world. He worked at Microsoft in Seattle, America, for three years (2003–2005). Microsoft was then developing its new operating system (OS) named Windows Vista. Rahul successfully developed the Internet Communications Protocol for the OS. He found his work to be very interesting and also received a handsome salary. He continued to develop his newfound interest in Public Policy Making. This gave purpose to his solitary nature and his interest in research. While working at Microsoft, he established an association known as Sangti based on the principle of 'Samaan Sheel Vyasnesu Sakhyam'. Its members were socially conscious individuals. The group was engaged in studying social inequality, social stratification, poverty, suffering, and how they affect the lives of people. They organized several activity-oriented programmes. The 10-member group consisted of Americans, Canadians, and a majority of Indians. As a member of the group, Rahul worked exhaustively on the subject of Meteoric Water Recharge. He studied complex subjects like old water distribution systems in India, failed British water-management policies, and present-day water-related problems. He also helped a group in West Bengal. Research revealed that the number of malnourished women was far greater in India than in any other developing nation. He teamed up with the organization, Asha for Education, to review the situation of women. These studies further piqued his interest in similar subjects. He realised how research played a key role in making effective policies. He quit Microsoft in 2005 to pursue a Master's degree in Public Policy from Columbia University. He exhausted his savings in six months. He again worked as a teaching assistant to pay for his studies and personal expenses. In 2007, Rahul received his Master's degree in Public Policy.

Rahul no longer wanted to work in the software industry. He wanted to make the most of his newly acquired knowledge. His next career move was to gain experience in the field of Public Policy. He bagged a job as a researcher in Berkeley University, California. He worked there till the end of 2008. Before implementing any policy it is necessary to assess its effectiveness, which was exactly the kind

of work Rahul was interested in. He highlights the importance of policy analysis by giving the example of a place in Rajasthan where a primary survey of the local schools revealed poor attendance and low pass rate of students. Research indicated that the harsh geographical conditions and food habits led to frequent stomach ailments in children. It was assessed that the solution to control the situation was to provide medicines. One of the village schools was chosen as a 'sample'. Medicines were dispensed in one classroom. Observations were drawn from the classroom provided with the medicines and another classroom where medicines were not provided. If the policy produced the desired outcome, then the policy to make provisions for medicines could be implemented in the schools located in all affected areas!

Rahul wanted to use his knowledge and skills for the welfare of Indians. His dream was fulfilled when he got the job as a researcher in Centre for Public Policy at IIMB (Indian Institute of Management Bangalore). He retained his Indian roots by choosing to work at Bangalore. Rahul believes that India is land of opportunities and a lot remains to be done for the welfare and betterment of the Indian society.

Rahul is presently working on the subject of Gender Asset Gap. India consists mainly of patriarchal households. In such a household, a male member is the head of the family and is entitled to the house, wealth, and property. Rahul is studying what implications it has on the family system. His studies will help to discover answers to various questions: Are men entitled to the property in most families? What is the impact on decision-making in households wherein women are entitled to property? Do asset-related gender disparities truly exist? Do people abide by the laws related to succession of wealth and property to women and daughters? What are its effects? This is the first time such a unique study will be conducted. Rahul is also researching on subjects like malnutrition in society and the literacy rate.

Rahul tells, 'The term GDP is often heard in national-level meetings and discussions. It is an acronym for Gross Domestic Product. If the GDP increases or keeps rising steadily, our leaders and policy-makers express satisfaction, but is it really worth it? What percent-

age of the population is considered to calculate the GDP? A 20% increase in GDP is not an indication of the country's progress. This cannot be the growth rate. This could be the growth rate in a particular field. If there is an increase in the growth rate of agriculture, it could be the growth rate of 60% to 70% of the people; it could be the growth rate of the country. Our Prime minister Dr Manmohan Singh is always harping on the idea of 'Inclusive Growth'. Responding to it, he amusingly asks, 'Does he even understand the meaning of this concept?'

Rahul regrets greatly that our policy makers don't mingle with the society. A policy maker must travel across the country, interact with those people for whom the policies are being formulated, and understand their issues and needs. He says that if they spend just a week in a month to interact with people, then the society can benefit greatly from their policies. Society doesn't thrive simply on numbers or statistics. He says that using the game of numbers one can show an upward trend in progress, whereas ground realities could be totally different.

Rahul says, 'The major difference between social science and other sciences is that other sciences have proven laws and definite answers to questions. In the case of social science, one has to consider numerous criteria and none of the principles are all-inclusive. Societies vary as per the geographical and social conditions. Accordingly, the applicable criteria and their roles change. Discussions and interactions prove useful at every stage. Thus, an effective policy can be formulated.'

Rahul attributes his progress to the faith his parents showed in him and the support they gave him. He says, 'They gave me the freedom to choose the field of specialization. They supported my decision to change my educational stream.' He expresses profound appreciation for his wife Tulika, who works as a computer engineer and was also a BITS's student. Rahul says that although he was aware that Public Policy wasn't a very high-paying job, he could work in this field because of his wife. He says that because his wife, who works with Google, USA, leads the financial front, he is able work in his field of interest.

He has some valuable piece of advice for the next batch of 'Ju-

niors'. He says, 'Are you really interested in doing what you do? Are you truly satisfied working just for the sake of money against your interests? Discover your passion. Choose a career which is aligned with your personal interests and aptitudes. The world is expanding rapidly. Numerous opportunities are emerging in every field. Becoming a doctor or an engineer is not everything. There are many new career opportunities wherein you can make a fortune. Think carefully, hunt for the opportunity, seize it, and be successful...!'

.....

Rahul Lahoti

Researcher, Centre for Public Policy, IIM, Bangalore



41

The young man was moving his hands and fingers in different patterns before a 3G-enabled handset. On its screen, I saw his video and that of another person who was responding to him likewise. The hand gestures they were making seemed familiar to the sign language seen in the news for the deaf on DD-National on Sunday afternoons. It occurred to me that they were both deaf. One of them is Manoj Patwari, the eldest son of Shashikant Patwari, a veteran journalist of Jalna, and Yamunadevi Patwari. He has two brothers, Rohit and Yogesh. Manoj was born on 28 June 1971. He was deaf since birth. The Patwaris gradually learned to cope with his disability.



Lion-heart

Manoj Patwari

Our society is ignorant and discriminatory towards those who are differently-abled including deaf people. There are many who either pity or scorn them. Repeatedly, their rights are trampled on because of government's apathy and society's narrow-mindedness. Manoj Patwari of Jalna did not let his deafness get in the way of his progress. He continues to fight for the rights of deaf people. His story serves to inspire everybody.

Manoj's grandfather ran the marquee rental business. Manoj was three years old when his grandfather's assistant took him to his home. He was seated in a room. Shortly afterwards, a big vessel fell down behind him making a loud noise. Alarmed, the assistant's entire family rushed towards Manoj. They were relieved to see he was safe. He was

playing happily and appeared totally unfazed by the noise. The assistant reported the incident to Manoj's grandfather while expressing concern that Manoj might be deaf. Medical tests confirmed that Manoj was indeed deaf. His worried parents consulted many expert doctors in Aurangabad, Mumbai, Pune, and Chennai, and it became painfully evident to them that there was no cure for Manoj's condition. Medical diagnosis revealed that his auditory nerves, which carry the signals from the inner ear to the brain, were completely inactive. The Patwaris found this very difficult to accept.

There were no schools for deaf children in Jalna. Manoj had to attend an ordinary school. He barely understood his teachers in class. Unable to cope with the mainstream curriculum, he had to quit school. In 1996, he directly appeared for his class 10 board exams, but he failed in two subjects. Thereafter, he stopped taking exams. Later, when he came to know of Open Universities offering degree courses for differently-abled persons, it gave him a glimmer of hope. He gained admission to Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University. He has to take one more paper in October to become an arts graduate!

He may not have gained much mainstream knowledge, but over the years he has acquired immense practical knowledge. When nature inflicts a problem, it also provides solutions to deal with it. Manoj is able to compensate for his hearing loss with his photographic memory, which allows him to remember things simply by observation. This has helped him to learn many skills such as repairing generators and electronic equipment, and electrical wiring. He learnt to operate a new offset machine shortly after it was installed in his father's printing press. He is also able to fix it if it has any minor problems. In 1993, a computer was introduced in his father's press. He quickly learnt DTP simply by observing the operator working at the computer. Likewise, he learnt to repair printers and refill printer cartridges. He is extremely helpful to his family when it comes to running his father's press, kerosene agency, and two shops. Besides, Manoj has devoted himself to a unique cause, which reflects the humanitarian aspect of his character.

Manoj never harboured any inferiority complex because of his deafness. Usually, deaf people cannot communicate verbally, but

Manoj manages to speak to some extent. Although he could not attend school, he pursued his interest of alphabet recognition. He is able to express himself by writing. He began to make an all-out effort to help those belonging to the deaf community. This gave birth to the social reformer in him. Of the 3% quota the Government has provided for the differently-abled in employment, 1% is reserved for deaf persons, but the harsh truth is that the quota is not filled and is often misused to appoint those who are ineligible. As a result, many challenged people are deprived of jobs. Manoj has dedicated himself to this cause for the past few years. In June 2010, the High Court ordered the Government to implement the 3% job reservation quota in employment for the differently-abled, yet it has not made any significant progress in that direction. Manoj has stood up against this very indifference. The Anna Hazare-led movement was instrumental in the implementation of the Right to Information Act, which has empowered Manoj in his campaign. Under the RTI act, he accesses information such as the number of disabled persons working in government offices, number of vacancies, and the eligibility of recruited candidates, to help deaf persons get jobs. He is also busy in starting a state-level organization for deaf people. A meeting of all organizations in the state for deaf people was held in Aurangabad on 20 August 2011. They are determined to take their fight for rights to the Parliament.

Manoj asks nothing in return for his efforts. Everyone in his family is well-off. He wants to use his knowledge, energy, and skill for the betterment of deaf people. He is fully determined to expose the fraudulent practices within the government. There are 353 organizations in the state for challenged persons. He has exposed that only three of these are government organizations whereas the remaining are private organizations. Manoj feels it is extremely necessary to put an end to such malpractice. He is outraged at organizations which shamelessly mint money under the guise of special schemes. He insists that deaf persons should also be the benefactors of the Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana.

Besides participating in various social activities, Manoj is keenly interested in cricket. He has been to Mumbai to get coaching in cricket. He started taking lessons in cricket from Ramakant

Achrekar, coach of master-blaster Sachin Tendulkar. However, he soon grew weary of Mumbai's environment and returned home. He is still in touch with the cricket organization for the deaf; the organization has invited him to a state-level cricket match to be held in September 2011! He keeps himself informed about such activities through the internet. For many years, he had been using emails to communicate with others, but of recent he is using Facebook to develop his connections. He uses this social-networking website to make friends and communicate with many deaf people in the state and across the world. Between them, they share information and inspiration...!

It is from such inspiration that Manoj draws his strength and continues to fight for the deaf community. He offers his selfless service to the society. He does not wish to be sympathised for his disability. He is a self-directed go-getter who desires to do something creative and worthwhile. He has his family that stands firmly by his side and also believes in him.

.....

Manoj Patwari

1/7/31, Rajendra Prasad Road, Jalna



Quotes

One may make some extra profit by deceiving customers but not for long. Such a person may be able to make a quick profit but gets out quickly...

– **Manish Rathi**

.....

The formula for success – ‘Courage, hard work, and good intentions’

– **Rameshwar Sandupatla**

.....

Are you really interested in doing what you do? Try to discover your interests—your passion and work towards it. Are you truly happy working for the sake of money against your interests? The world is expanding rapidly, and countless opportunities are emerging in every field. Becoming a doctor or an engineer isn’t everything. Beyond such mainstream jobs, there are many new prospective avenues where you can also make a fortune. Think carefully, hunt for the opportunity, seize it, and be successful...!

– **Rahul Lahoti**

.....

Have a creative approach towards work and involve everybody. The ability to take everybody forward only can create a new India.

– **Vijayanna Borade**

.....

Our attitude should be to work for the community and not simply for ourselves. Money will be acquired sooner or later and its appropriate use is up to us.

– **Nitin Kabra**

Quotes

This undertaking is too immense for a single individual and demands the division of responsibilities among its many partners. Moreover, each partner solely manages his responsibilities. The interest and views of our stockholders are of prime consideration. Each person plays his role boldly and our unity has been unwavering and will continue to be so in the future. The group plans to expand their business further.

– **Dwarkaprasad Soni**

.....

Believe in destiny, but also carry out your actions (karma).

– **Narottam Hansora**

.....

One's main aim in life cannot be solely to earn money. Students must plan their career based on their interests, area of specialisation, and long-term goals. To realise a career, money can be the means but it should not be confused as the immediate goal. Keep lofty goals and aim for something significant in life. Don't rush behind money. Money will definitely come to you if you have the courage to stand firm and act by your decisions.

– **Rahul Bansal**

.....

Money is important but it is not everything. To live one does not require a lot of money, but to stay ahead in the competition, there is simply no alternative to hard work. Sincerity towards your work is equally important. I learned homeopathy and forever remained sincere to my occupation. This opened the door to my success.

– **Dr Satish More**

.....

My role as a wife, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, and mother would completely dilute my individuality. However, I had to retain

Quotes

myself and struggle to retain my identity. Even if covering my head at home was necessary, I had to avoid breaking my neck under it. This needed great mental strength and confidence. I stepped into marital life with the youthful vigour and confidence mustered in my college years and kept progressing forward. Even today the wonderful memories of my youth – an age filled with irrepressible aspirations of life and brimming with happiness and enthusiasm – haunt me. Though I know well that it is impossible to relive the past, yet I wish I could entreat God to give back those four years, so I can live them again... even in exchange for the rest of my remaining life.

– **Rekha Baijal**

.....

Paying taxes as a citizen is not only obligatory, but it is also instrumental for the nation's collective progress. If we wish to earn 100 rupees and part with 30 rupees as tax then it is only practical to earn 140 rupees.

– **Dinesh Chajed**

.....

Why impose your own principles on others? Imposing personal beliefs only widens the generation gap because expectations are the root cause of unhappiness. Keep expectations away and your life will automatically improve is his happiness formula for all.

– **Gopikishan Kabra**

.....

Hiring the finest experts is important to develop the best product and maintaining its quality at all times. Of course, all this requires money. It is vital to earn good profits to run the company effectively. Research and development requires hefty investments. Therefore, since the beginning, the quality of our seeds has been exceptional, and they are highly priced in the market.

– **Badrinarayan Barwale**

Notes

This image shows a single page of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Notes

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Vikram Narayan Ghatе

Vikram graduated from Sathaye College, Mumbai. Thereafter, he got training in 3D and graphic design. He started out his career as a 3D artist and Web designer with a multimedia company. He later joined a company specializing in e-learning where he worked in the capacity of a 3D artist, graphic designer, SME, writer, reviewer, and voice-over artist.



After he went solo, he undertook many freelance projects. With more than eight years of work experience, he is currently in the process of forming his own company, Emotive Graphics, with the aim to provide comprehensive range of 3D animation and multimedia services.

During his brief stint in Jalna, he imparted training in English language and Presentation Skills to the staff of Vinodrai Engineers Pvt. Ltd. Impressed by Shri Raithata's 'Young Innovators' initiative, he assisted Shri Raithata to enrich the Young Innovators' library with the best selection of books related to education, arts, crafts, and hobbies, that are guaranteed to capture the interests of both young and old.

Vikram Narayan Ghatе / 9167284703 / emotivegraphics@gmail.com

About The AUTHOR...

Datta U. Joshi

Datta Umakantrao Joshi was born in 1971 in Deoni, Udgir Taluka, Latur District. He completed secondary education from the Z. P. School. He acquired higher secondary education in electronics from Lal Bahadur Shastri Jr. College, Udgir. Interested in journalism, he pursued a BA degree instead of an engineering career, from Udayagiri College, Udgir, under the guidance of Prof. Dr. N. Y. Dole, the Eminent Social Thinker. He entered Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University to pursue education in Journalism. He ranked second in the University with an exceptional score when he earned his Bachelor's degree in Journalism (BJ). He has also obtained a first-class Master's degree in Mass Communication and Journalism (MMCJ).



In his career in the field of developmental journalism spanning 15 years, his articles were published in the Pune and Aurangabad editions of Sakaal, Devgiri Tarun Bharat. The 'front page' was his forte. He conducted various experiments in the period in which colours were introduced into black-and-white newspapers. He was lauded by many experts of Journalism for introducing new trends in news design by using his aesthetic sense and computer skills. His works are an excellent reference to those who wish to study the art of proper sequencing of information in writing, which engrosses the reader.

He got the opportunity to travel to various places in the state and outside the state to gather news for dailies. The articles in which he captured the pulse of the masses during the elections in Tamilnadu and Karnataka, writings on unconventional topics and his remarks on them were a feast for his readers. Before he embarked on his journalistic career, he visited the chief states in India as part of the students' movement. The experiences he had during his travels enriched his bag-gage of experience. In 2005, he quit his job in journalism and started to work independently. He is interested in motivational writing. His book entitled 'Zep', based on the first generation of entrepreneurs from Marathwada region, as well as ICON's series in Marathi through various Districts in Maharashtra, were very well received. He is also a columnist for various periodicals.

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